

THE FOURTEENTH OF JULY

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THE FOURTEENTH OF JULY

A PLAY OF THE FRENCH REVOLUTION

BY
ROMAIN ROLLAND

AUTHORIZED TRANSLATION
BY
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LONDON
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MUSEUM STREET

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AUTHOR'S NOTE

THE author has sought moral truth in this play rather than anecdotic exactitude. He has seen fit to take greater liberty with the action, which is developed in the poetry of popular legend, than in *Danton*. In that play, he applied himself to the development of the psychology of certain characters, for the whole drama is concentrated in the souls of three or four great men. It is otherwise with the present work: individuals disappear in the great ocean of the people. If you wish to represent a tempest, you must not describe each wave, but a whole angry sea: an exact rendering of details is much less important than the passionate sweeping truth of the whole. There is something false and insulting to the intelligence in the disproportionate place given nowadays to historic anecdotes, tiny incidents, and the dust shaken out of the pages of history, all of which is emphasized at the expense of the human side. It is my ideal to resuscitate the forces of the past, reveal once more the springs of action, and not to offer a cold and denatured miniature to the curious who care more for externals than for the soul of the hero. I have endeavored to make live again the heroism and the faith of the nation in the throes of the Revolution during the Republican epoch, in order that we, a nation of greater maturity and more than ever conscious of the great destiny that awaits

THE FOURTEENTH OF JULY

(*LE 14 JUILLET*)

A Play in Three Acts

Pour qu'une nation soit libre,
il suffit qu'elle le veuille.

LA FAYETTE.

14th July, 1789.

[*Le 14 Juillet* was produced in Paris in 1902.]

CAST OF CHARACTERS:

LA CONTAT	GONCHON
LUCILE DUPLESSIS	DE FLUE
MARIE BOUJU, THE FRUIT-DEALER	BÉQUART
FIRST WOMAN OF THE PEOPLE	ROBESPIERRE
SECOND WOMAN OF THE PEOPLE	A MANIAC
FIRST WOMAN	A PORTER
SECOND WOMAN	A NOTARY
THIRD WOMAN	A FRENCH GUARD
A YOUNG GIRL	A STUDENT
LITTLE JULIE	A VAGABOND
HOCHE	A SHOPKEEPER
HULIN	FIRST NEWS-CRIER
MARAT	SECOND NEWS-CRIER
CAMILLE DESMOULINS	AN ABBÉ
VINTIMILLE	FIRST BOURGEOIS
DE LAUNEY	SECOND BOURGEOIS
THE MAN	THIRD BOURGEOIS

FOURTH BOURGEOIS

The People: French Guards, Swiss Guards, Pensioners, Carpenters, Workingmen, Children, etc.

SCENE: Paris from the 12th to the 14th July, 1789.

Act I. At the Palais-Royal, Sunday morning, 12th July.

Act II. The Faubourg Saint-Antoine, Monday night and Tuesday morning, 13th-14th July.

Act III. The Bastille, Tuesday the 14th July, from four to seven P.M.

Dedicated to the People of Paris

some of whom play about between the legs of the others.]

NEWS-CRIERS. Great plot discovered! Famine, famine is at hand! The murderers have come!

THE CROWD [*calling to the news-criers*]. Here! Sst!

A MAN OF THE PEOPLE [*anxiously, to a bourgeois, who is reading*]. Well?

THE BOURGEOIS. My good fellow, they are coming! They're coming! The Germans, the Swiss Guards! Paris is surrounded! They'll be here any minute!

THE MAN OF THE PEOPLE. The King won't let them.

A VAGABOND. The King? He's with them at the camp of Sablons, surrounded by Germans.

THE MAN OF THE PEOPLE. The King is a Frenchman.

THE BOURGEOIS. The King, yes, but not the Queen. The Austrian woman hates us. Her brigand Marshal de Broglie has sworn to raze Paris to the ground. We are caught between the cannon of the Bastille and the troops of the Champ de Mars.

A STUDENT. They won't make a move. Monsieur Necker is at Versailles; he will take care of us.

THE BOURGEOIS. Yes, so long as he remains Minister, we must not lose our faith in him.

THE VAGABOND. But who says he still is? They've dismissed him.

ALL [*protesting*]. No, no, he's still Minister.—

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us, may continue and finish the work interrupted in 1794. If we are strong enough to realize this, we are strong enough to do our best toward the accomplishment of our task. The end of art is not dreams, but life. Action should spring from the spectacle of action.

June, 1901.

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A WOMAN. Good God, what will become of us?

A BOURGEOIS. The bandits! They treat us like enemies!

A WORKINGMAN [*to GONCHON*]. How do you know that? The road to Versailles is cut off. They've stationed cannon at the Pont de Sèvres. No one can pass.

GONCHON. Suspicious, eh? I'll make the first man who doubts my patriotism swallow my fist. Don't you know Gonchon?

THE WORKINGMAN. We don't suspect you.—Don't get excited.—We've too much to do to get into a quarrel with you. We only asked you where you got your information?

GONCHON. You haven't the right to ask me. I know what I know. I have a way of knowing.

ANOTHER WORKINGMAN [*to the First*]. Let him alone; he's all right.

A BOURGEOIS. Lord, what shall we do?

A STUDENT. To the gates! Everybody to the gates! Don't let them in!

ACT I

[The Garden of the Palais-Royal, seen from the Café de Foy. It is Sunday the 12th of July, 1789. At the back is the "Cirque"; at the right, a fountain, playing. Between the "Cirque" and the promenades running round the Palais-Royal is a row of trees. The shopkeepers stand before their shops, which are hung with patriotic emblems: "At the Sign of the Great Necker," "At the Sign of the National Assembly," etc. Women, with breasts, shoulders, and arms bare, and wearing immense bouquets, walk about among the crowd displaying their charms. Newsdealers cry out the news; gambling-house keepers appear here and there in dressing-gowns, escorted by men armed with clubs; swindlers brazenly slip between groups of people with their folding tabourets, stop for an instant, display a trick, bring out sacks of silver, then quickly disappear into the surging mass. The crowds are nervously shifting about, sitting at the cafés, jumping up and around, and ready to start at the least disturbance. The crowds gradually increase up to the end of the act, until there is so little room left that the more venturesome climb into the trees. People of all classes are present: starving vagabonds, workingmen, bourgeois, aristocrats, soldiers, priests, women, and children,

some of whom play about between the legs of the others.]

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ALL [*protesting*]. No, no, he's still Minister.—

The newspaper says he will remain Minister.—Good! If Monsieur Necker weren't there, everything would be lost.

WOMEN [*promenading about*]. No business today! They are all quite mad. They think of nothing but Versailles.—The little fellow who was with me just now spoke of nothing but Necker.—Say, is it true that that damned Austrian threw our deputies into prison?

THE SWINDLERS [*mysteriously shaking their bags of silver under the noses of the passers-by*]. Fine Sunday morning! Ten o'clock and the garden is full! What will it be soon?—Fine show and a small crop! They're here to get the latest news.—Oh, if you only know how to go about it—!

GONCHON [*to the shopkeepers*]. Now, you fellows, stir yourselves, stir yourselves! Business isn't everything. Of course, business must be carried on, but we must be good patriots, too. Keep your eyes open. I warn you, things are beginning to happen!

A SHOPKEEPER. Do you know something, Monsieur Gonchon?

GONCHON. Careful. Grain is coming. Every one at his post. When the moment comes, give it to those idiots, and howl all together—

A SHOPKEEPER. Long live the Nation!

GONCHON [*hitting him*]. Shut up, you fool. "Long live the Duc d'Orléans!" Then, if you like; both.

CAMILLE DESMOULINS [*who has just come from a gambling-den—excited, laughing and stammering*]. Plucked! They've cleaned me!—I knew it: I said to

myself, "Camille, you're going to get plucked." Now you're satisfied! It's done. Well, I don't have it to do over again. I always foresee the stupid things I am going to do. Thank God, I don't lack a single—anyway, I've killed two hours. What news from Versailles?—Oh, the rascal! They are thick as thieves at a fair. The gambling-dens advertise, "You come in to pass the time." You've got to occupy your hands and the rest! That is why cards and women were invented. They can relieve you of useless money. Now my pockets weigh nothing at all! Who wants to see a brand-new purse? Oh, there's not a piece left.

WOMEN [*mocking him*]. "They stir you up, up, up, they'll stir you up."

CAMILLE DESMOULINS. You bats of Venus, you're very proud, indeed, to have swindled a poor devil like me! But, Good God, he's not angry with you. "I'd lose it again if I had it to lose."

AN OLD BOURGEOIS. The gambler's purse has no strings.

GONCHON. Young man, I see you are in trouble. To oblige you, I will lend you three écus on that chain.

DESMOULINS. Generous Gonchon, do you want to strip me naked like St. John? Leave that to the ladies: they will do very well without your assistance.

GONCHON. You little guttersnipe, do you know whom you are addressing?

DESMOULINS. Gonchon—merely Gonchon! You are a jeweler, usurer, vendor of lemonade, and keeper of a brothel. You are everything: Gonchon, king of the gambling-den keepers.

GONCHON. What do you mean by your "gambling-dens"? I have merely founded clubs where, under the pretext of enjoying themselves by honest and natural means, men may gather and discuss methods of reforming the State. They are assemblies of free citizens, patriots—

DESMOULINS. Where does the *Patrie* come in?

GONCHON. The Society of the Men of Nature—

DESMOULINS. Women of Nature!

GONCHON. A very bad joke. If you haven't enough shame to respect a respectable man, you might at least respect the sign beneath the egis of which stands my house.

DESMOULINS [*without looking*]. What sign? "The Forty Thieves"?

GONCHON [*furiously*]. "The Great Necker"!

DESMOULINS. That is rather hard on him, Gonchon. [*He looks at the sign.*] What is on the other side?

GONCHON. Nothing.

DESMOULINS. I see another picture.

GONCHON. The Duc d'Orléans—two sides of the same head.

DESMOULINS. The front and the back! [*The bystanders laugh.* GONCHON, *with his associates, advances upon DESMOULINS.*] Very well! I advise you not to drive me to crush you with my Pretorian Guard! Do you want a certificate of citizenship? Oh, Janus Gonchon, I make you a present of it. You give bread to every sneak in Paris, and take it from the honest people, so that they have only one desire: to go and fight. *Audax et edax.* Long live the Revolution!

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A STUDENT. To the gates! Everybody to the gates! Don't let them in!

A BOURGEOIS. As if they could stop them! Poor people like ourselves, without arms! What do they know of war! Can they keep out the best troops of the kingdom?

ANOTHER. They're in already! And there's the Bastille; it's like a cancer—incurable!

A WORKINGMAN. The vile monster! Who will free us?

A STUDENT. They've already made a company of Swiss Guards retreat today.

ANOTHER. Their cannon are in the Faubourg Saint-Antoine.

A WORKINGMAN. Can't do a thing while we have this bit in our mouths. We've got to take it out first.

A BOURGEOIS. How?

A WORKINGMAN. I don't know how, but it's got to be done.

ALL [*seriously and incredulously*]. Take the Bastille? [*They turn to one another.*]

NEWS-CRIERS [*in the distance*]. Latest news! Desperate struggle!

A MAN [*shabby and pale, with the air of a maniac*]. We haven't anything to fear from the soldiers. They won't attack.

A STUDENT. What!

THE MANIAC. They won't attack. They've got a simpler plan: they'll just blockade us. They'll starve us out.

A WORKINGMAN. Well, if they do it for very long, we'll take the road. We've lost a whole day waiting for bread at the bakeries.

A WOMAN. You can't get grain.

THE MANIAC. It won't arrive tomorrow.

A BOURGEOIS. But what are they doing with it?

THE MANIAC. I know: they've thrown it into the quarries of Senlis and Chantilly to let it rot, and keep us from eating it.

THE BOURGEOIS [*incredulously*]. Nonsense!

THE MANIAC. It's true!

A WOMAN. It is true. In Champagne the cavalry ruined the wheat crop in order to starve us.

THE MANIAC. Worse than that! They poison the bread they give us: it burns your throat and your insides. Twenty people died of it in my part of the city. The order came from Versailles. They want to kill us like rats.

DESMOULINS. Absurd. No king wants to murder his people. Only a Nero would do that, and our king is not a Nero.

THE MANIAC [*mysteriously*]. I know what the matter is: there are too many people, and they've given orders to depopulate the country.

DESMOULINS. You're sick, my friend, you need attention.

A WORKINGMAN. There's truth in what he says, though. The Queen would be glad to see us all dead.

DESMOULINS. Why so?

THE WORKINGMAN. She's an Austrian. The Austrians have always been enemies of France. She married our king in order to injure us. We can't help being nervous so long as she is here.

THE OTHERS. He's right.—Out of France with the Austrian!

LA CONTAT [*in the midst of the Crowd*]. Why?

THE CROWD. What?—What do you mean?

LA CONTAT [*showing herself*]. Yes, why? Are you mad to say such things about the most charming of women?

THE CROWD. Who dares say anything good of the Austrian here?—Good Lord, why, it's an insult to us!

DESMOULINS [*to LA CONTAT*]. Don't say another word. You'd better get out and not answer them.

LA CONTAT. I am in no hurry.

DESMOULINS. They're gathering strength from all sides.

LA CONTAT. So much the better!

A VAGABOND. What did you say, aristocrat? What did you say?

LA CONTAT [*brushing him aside*]. Don't sniff at me. I said, Long live the Queen!

THE CROWD [*exasperated*]. By God!

A CLERK. There's a girl who needs a good thrashing.

LA CONTAT. There's a face that needn't wait for one! [*She slaps him.*]

THE CLERK. Help! [*Some laugh, others shout.*]

THE CROWD [*gathering round*]. Come and see!—What's the matter?—An aristocrat assaulting a patriot!—Into the river!

DESMOULINS. Citizens, it's only a joke.

THE CROWD [*furiously*]. To the river!

HULIN [*bullying the Crowd*]. Here! [*He stands*

before LA CONTAT.] You know me, comrades, I am Hulin. You saw me at work the other day: I smashed in the gate of the Abbey to save our friends the French Guards, who were imprisoned. I'll smash in the head of the first man who comes a step nearer. Respect the women, I tell you! If you want to fight, there's no lack of enemies. Go and find them.

THE CROWD. He's right.—Bravo!—No, he isn't!—She insulted us!—She's got to apologize! On her knees, the aristocrat!—Make her cry Down with the Queen!

LA CONTAT. I won't cry anything. [*To DESMOULINS.*] Help me to get up here. [*She stands on a table.*] If you bully me any more I'll cry Down with Necker! [*Cries from the Crowd.*] I'm not afraid of you. Do you think you can frighten me because you're a mob, and your hundred mouths are yapping at me? I have only one, but I can make myself heard. I'm used to talking to the people. I face you every night: I am Mademoiselle Contat.

THE CROWD. Contat of the Théâtre-Français!—The Théâtre-Français!—Oh, let's see her!—Silence!

LA CONTAT. So you don't like the Queen? Do you want her sent away? Would you like to exile every pretty woman from France? You have only to say the word: we'll pack up and go. See what will happen without us. You really make me laugh, calling me an aristocrat! I'm the daughter of a herring-dealer, who kept shop just under the Châtelet. I work like the rest of you. I am for Necker just as you are. I'm for the Assembly, but I don't like to be bullied, and I

really think if you took it into your heads to try to make me cry Long live Comedy, I would cry Down with Molière! You may think whatever you like: there's no law against stupidity, but then there's no law against those who still have a little common sense. I like the Queen, and I am not afraid to say so.

A STUDENT. Of course: they both have the Comte d'Artois for a lover!

TWO WORKINGMEN. What a lie!—She can certainly talk!

DESMOULINS. Citizens, we cannot ask a queen to speak against royalty. Here is the true queen! The others are make-believe royalty, whose only function is to bear dauphins. Once the little one is born, they have nothing else to do. They live at our expense, and they are costly luxuries. It would be best to send this Austrian fowl back to her coop, from which she was brought at great cost—as if we lacked women in France to bear children! But the queens of the theater! Ah, they are intended to give happiness to the people. Every hour of their life is devoted to our service. Every bit of them is devoted to our pleasure; they belong to us, they are our national property. By Venus of the Beautiful Cheeks, let us defend her, and all shout: Long live the Queen, the true Queen, La Contat! [*Laughter and applause.*]

THE CROWD. Long live Queen Contat!

LA CONTAT. Thank you. [*To DESMOULINS.*] Give me your arm; you're nicer than the others.—Have you feasted your eyes enough? Very well, then

let me by. If you want to see me again, you know the way to the Theater.—What is your name?

DESMOULINS. Camille Desmoulins.—How imprudent of you! I told you—weren't you afraid?

LA CONTAT. Of what?

DESMOULINS. They nearly killed you.

LA CONTAT. The idea! They shout, of course, but they never do anything.

DESMOULINS. You are blind. They are right who say that to despise danger is merely to be unaware of it.

THE CROWD. The little lady has warmth in her eyes!—Elsewhere, too!

A WORKINGMAN. That's all very well, Mademoiselle, but it's not the thing to set yourself against the poor like us, and side with the people who are exploiting us!

THE MANIAC. Lord, she's a monopolist!

LA CONTAT. What! A monopolist!

THE MANIAC. Look at your wig.

LA CONTAT. Well?

THE MANIAC. All that powder! There's enough flour on the necks of the idle rich to feed the poor of Paris!

THE WORKINGMAN [to LA CONTAT]. Never mind him; he's crazy. If you have a good heart, Mademoiselle—and I can see in your eyes that you have—how can you defend the cut-throats who want to destroy us?

LA CONTAT. Destroy you, my friend? Who told you that?

A STUDENT. Don't you know? Here's the latest

letter from the Austrian's man, the Jesuit Marshal, the old assassin, the ass decorated with amulets, relics, and medals: de Broglie! Do you know what he says?

CROWD. Read! Read!

THE STUDENT. They have conspired. They want to break up our States-General, take away our deputies and throw them into prison, expel our Necker, sell Lorraine to the Emperor for money to pay their soldiers, bombard Paris and kill the inhabitants. The plot is scheduled for tonight.

GONCHON. Did you hear that? Isn't that enough, or do you want still more to stir you up? Good God, are we to let them stick us like pigs? God Almighty, to arms! To arms!—Luckily, we have a protector; he's watching over us: Long live Orléans!

GONCHON'S FOLLOWERS. Long live Orléans!

THE CROWD. To arms! Let's march against them!

MARAT [*rising from the Crowd, and standing on a chair. He is a small man, and appears nervous and deeply agitated. He stands tip-toe, and then speaks with all his power*]. Stop! You poor wretches, where are you going? Don't you see that the cut-throats are only waiting for an insurrection in Paris to swoop down upon the city? Don't listen to such perfidious advice. That is only a ruse to destroy you. Yes, you, you who excite the people, you who pretend to be a patriot,—who says you are not an agent of despotism, whose business it is to provoke the good citizens and deliver them into the hands of the hordes of Versailles?

Who are you? Where do you come from? Who will guarantee you? I don't know you.

GONCHON. Well, I don't know *you*.

MARAT. If you don't know me, you are a scoundrel. I am known wherever there is virtue and poverty. I spend my nights taking care of the sick, and my days taking care of the people. My name is Marat.

GONCHON. I don't know you.

MARAT. If you don't, you will before long, traitor! Oh, credulous people, absurd people, open your eyes. Do you realize where you are? What, do you gather here to prepare your struggle for liberty? Look, look about you! This is the gathering-place of all the exploiters, all the idle classes, swindlers, thieves, prostitutes, disguised spies, the instruments of the aristocracy! [*Howls, protestations, and the like, from one part of the Crowd, which cries: "Down with him!" and bare their fists.*]

DESMOULINS. Bravo, Marat! Struck the nail on the head!

LA CONTAT. Who is that dirty little fellow with such beautiful eyes?

DESMOULINS. A doctor-journalist.

ANOTHER PART OF THE CROWD. Go on! [*They applaud.*]

MARAT. I care nothing for the howling of these traitors, these accomplices of famine and servitude! They rob you of what money you have left; they drain your strength with their women, and your good sense with liquor! Fools! And you put yourselves in their clutches, and blurt out your secrets to them! You

give yourselves into the hands of the enemy. Behind each pillar, at the corner of each café, beside you, at your table, a spy listens to you, watches you, takes down what you say, and prepares your destruction. You who want to be free, leave this sink of vice! Before entering the supreme struggle, begin by counting your forces. Where are your weapons? You have none. Forge your pikes, I tell you, make your muskets! Where are your friends? You have none. Your own neighbor betrays you. Perhaps the man you shake hands with, is delivering you into the hands of the enemy. And you yourselves, are you sure of yourselves? You are at war with corruption, and you are corrupted. [*Howls from the Crowd.*] You protest? If the aristocracy offered you gold and food, do you dare swear that you would not become aristocrats yourselves? You cannot silence me with your protestations. You will hear the truth. You are too accustomed to flatterers who court your favor and betray you. You are vain, proud, frivolous: you have neither strength, character, nor virtue. You waste your strength in talk. You are effeminate, vacillating, will-less; you tremble at the sight of a musket—

CROWD. That'll do!—Enough!

MARAT. You shout "Enough"! I, too, and even louder: Enough of vice, enough of stupidity, enough of cowardice! Band yourselves together, strike from your midst all who are false to the cause, purify your minds, and gird your loins. Oh, my fellow-citizens, I tell you these truths a little harshly, perhaps, but it is because I love you!

LA CONTAT. See! He's crying!

MARAT. They give you opium, but I pour burning liquor on your bleeding wounds, and I will continue to do so until you realize your rights and your duties, until you are free, until you are happy. Yes, in spite of your frivolousness, you will be happy, you will be happy, or I shall cease to exist! [*He ends, his cheeks streaming with tears, his voice broken with sobs.*]

LA CONTAT. His cheeks are running with tears! How funny he is!

THE CROWD [*half laughing, the other half applauding*]. There's a real friend of the people! Long live Marat! [*They surround him, put him on their shoulders and, in spite of his struggles, carry him about.*]

HULIN [*catching sight of a little girl who is looking at MARAT, her eyes full of tears*]. What's the trouble, little one? You're crying, too? [*The Little Girl keeps her eyes fixed on MARAT, whose bearers have now allowed him to alight. She runs to him.*]

LITTLE JULIE [*to MARAT, her hands clasped*]. Don't cry! Don't cry!

MARAT [*looking at her*]. What is it, little one?

JULIE. Don't be unhappy, please! We'll be better, I promise, we won't be cowards any more. We won't lie; we'll be good, I swear! [*The Crowd laughs. HULIN motions those near him to be silent, and not interrupt the Little Girl. MARAT, who is seated, assumes a different expression as he listens to her. His face brightens, and he looks tenderly at the child, and takes her hands in his.*]

MARAT. Why do you cry?

JULIE. Because you cry.

MARAT. Do you know me?

JULIE. When I was sick, you took care of me.

MARAT [*draws her tenderly toward him, and looks into her eyes, smoothing her hair back from her face.*]

Yes, your name is Julie. Your mother is a washer-woman. You had measles last winter. You were afraid. You cried as you lay in your little bed, because you didn't want to die. [*She turns her head away. He takes the child's head and presses it to his breast as he smiles.*] Don't be ashamed. So, you understood me, eh? You are with me? Do you know what I should like?

JULIE. Yes, and I want it, too— [*The rest of her sentence is lost, as she hesitates.*]

MARAT. What?

JULIE [*raising her head and speaking with an air of conviction that causes the bystanders to smile*]. Liberty.

MARAT. What would you do with it?

JULIE. Give it.

MARAT. To whom?

JULIE. To the poor people who are in prison.

MARAT. Where?

JULIE. There—in the big prison. They're alone all the time, and people forget them. [*The attitude of the Crowd changes. It has become serious; some frown and do not look at their neighbors. They stare at the ground, and appear to be speaking to themselves.*]

MARAT. How do you know that, little one?

JULIE. I know—I've been told. I often think about them, at night.

MARAT [*smoothing her hair*]. But you must sleep at night.

JULIE [*after a few moments' pause, takes MARAT's hand, and says with passion*]. We will free them, won't we?

MARAT. But how?

JULIE. Go there all together.

THE CROWD [*laughing*]. Ha! It's so easy! [*The Little Girl raises her eyes, and sees the circle of curious onlookers staring at her. She is frightened and hides her head in her arm, which rests on HULIN's table.*]

LA CONTAT. Isn't she dear!

MARAT [*looking at her*]. Holy virtue of childhood, pure spark of goodness, what a comfort you are! How dark would the world be without children's eyes! [*He goes gravely toward the child, takes her hand, which hangs limp, and kisses her.*]

A WOMAN OF THE PEOPLE [*arriving on the scene*]. Julie! Are you here! What are you doing with all these people?

DESMOULINS. She was addressing the crowd. [*Laughter.*]

THE MOTHER. And she so frightened! What's got into her? [*She goes to JULIE, but the moment she touches her, the little one runs away without a word, in childish rage.*]

THE CROWD [*laughing and applauding*]. Run away, little one! [*Loud laughter is heard at the other*

end of the Garden.—Come here! Come along!—What is it? They are ducking a countess!

LA CONTAT. Ducking a countess?

THE CROWD. She insulted the people! They're ducking her in the fountain!

LA CONTAT [*on DESMOULINS' arm, laughing*]. Let's run! How amusing!

DESMOULINS. The most amusing performance in Europe!

LA CONTAT. Insolent! What about the Comédie? [*They go out laughing. The Crowd surges out. MARAT and HULIN are down-stage alone; MARAT stands, while HULIN sits at a café table. The back of the stage is crowded; some are standing on chairs, watching to see what is happening in the Garden. People walk about under the galleries beyond MARAT and HULIN.*]

MARAT [*pointing toward the Crowd*]. Actors! They are not seeking liberty; they prefer plays! To-day, when their very lives are in danger, they think of nothing but performing for each other. I want nothing to do with such people! Their insurrections are nothing but absurd antics. I don't want to see any more of them. Oh, to live shut up in a cave, hear nothing of the noise outside, to be free from the vileness of the world! [*He sits down, his head between his hands.*]

HULIN [*tranquilly smoking, with a look of irony, says to MARAT*]. Come, Monsieur Marat, you mustn't be discouraged. It's not worth it. They are only big children playing. You know them as well as I do:

they don't mean anything by that. Why take it so tragically?

MARAT [*raising his head, says with determination*]. Who are you?

HULIN. I come from your country—Neuchâtel in Switzerland. Don't you remember me? I know you very well. I saw you when you were a child—at Boudry.

MARAT. So you are Hulin, Augustin Hulin?

HULIN. Right!

MARAT. What are you doing here? You were a clock-maker in Geneva.

HULIN. I led a quiet life there. But I was counting without my brother, who began to speculate. He became imbroiled in some underhanded scheme, signed certain papers—. Naturally, he took it into his head to die, and left his wife and a child of three for me to take care of. I sold my shop to pay his debts, and came to Paris, where I was taken into the service of the Marquis de Vintimille.

MARAT. Then I'm not surprised at your cowardly words. You are a servant.

HULIN. What if I am?

MARAT. Are you not ashamed to serve another man?

HULIN. I see no shame in it. Each of us serves, in one way or another. Are you not a doctor, Monsieur Marat? You spend your days examining people's wounds, and dressing them as well as you can. You go to bed very late, and you get up at night when your patients call you. Are you not then a servant?

MARAT. I serve no master: I serve humanity. But you are the valet of a corrupt man, a miserable aristocrat.

HULIN. I don't serve him because he is corrupt. You don't ask of your patients whether they are good or bad; they are men, poor devils like you and me. When they need help, you must give it and not stop to consider. Like many another, my master is corrupted by wealth. He cannot help himself: he needs a score of people to serve him. Now, I have three times as much strength as I need, and I don't know what use to make of it. Occasionally, I feel I would like to break something just to ease my feelings. If that idiot needs my power, I am willing to sell it to him. We are then quits. I do him good, and myself, too.

MARAT. You also sell him your free soul, your conscience.

HULIN. Who says anything about that? I defy any one to take that from me.

MARAT. And yet you submit. You don't tell all you think.

HULIN. What need I say? I know what I think. It's all very well for those who don't know to cry it aloud from the house-tops! I don't think for others; I think for myself.

MARAT. Nothing that is in you belongs to you. You do not belong to yourself; you are a part of every one. You owe your strength to others, your will-power, your intelligence—no matter how little you possess.

HULIN. Will-power and intelligence are not currency that one may give. Work done for others is work ill done. I have made myself free. Let the others do likewise!

MARAT. There, in those words, I recognize my odious compatriots! Simply because Nature has given them six feet of body and the muscles of an animal, they think they have a right to despise those who are weak and ill. And when after they have reaped their harvests and worked in their fields, they sit down satisfied before their own doors, smoking a vile pipe the nasty smoke of which calms their tiny consciences, they think they have done their duty, and tell their less fortunate brothers who ask for help to "go and do likewise."

HULIN [*quietly*]. How well you know me! You have described me perfectly. [*He smiles to himself.*]

HOCHÉ [*who comes in. He wears the uniform of a corporal of the French Guards. He carries some clothes over his arm. To MARAT*]. Don't believe him, citizen. He libels himself. He never refuses the outstretched hand of misfortune. Only last week, he took command of us and freed the French Guards who were imprisoned in the Abbey by the aristocrats.

HULIN [*without turning his head, extends his hand over his shoulder*]. Ah, it's you, Hoche? Who has asked for your advice? You're talking nonsense! I was telling you not long ago that sometimes I feel I have too much strength, and then I knock in a door, or demolish a wall. And, of course, when I see a drowning man, I offer him a helping hand. I don't

reason about those things. But I don't lie in wait for people who are going to drown, nor do I throw them into the water—like these people who start revolutions—just in order to fish them out afterward.

MARAT. You are ashamed of the good you do. I hate these people who brag of their vices. [*He turns his back.*] What are you carrying there?

HOCHE. Some waistcoats that I embroidered; I'm trying to sell them.

MARAT. Pretty work for a soldier! Do you mend clothes?

HOCHE. It's as good a trade as tearing them.

MARAT. Don't you blush to steal women's business? So that is what you are doing? You think of your business, you hoard your gold, when Paris is about to swim in blood!

HOCHE [*quietly, and with a touch of disdain*]. Oh, we have time enough. Everything in due time.

MARAT. Your heart is cold, your pulse is slow. You are no patriot. [*To HULIN.*] And as for you, you are worse than if you really did what you brag about! You had a decent healthy character, which you are wilfully perverting.—Oh, Liberty, these are your defenders. Indifferent to the dangers that beset you, they will do nothing to combat them! I at least will not abandon you, I alone. I shall watch over the people. I will save them in spite of themselves. [*He goes out.*]

HULIN [*watching him go, and laughing*]. Our gay associate! He sees everything through pink spectacles. He's a doctor from my country. One feels im-

mediately that he is used to commanding people. He hasn't enough to do in his own business, he must needs treat all humanity.

HOCHE [*following MARAT with his eyes, and with a mixture of pity and interest*]. An honest man. The woes of humanity weigh heavy on his shoulders; they unhinge his reason and his judgment. He is sick with virtue.

HULIN. Where did you know him?

HOCHE. I've read his books.

HULIN. You must have time to waste. Where did you get hold of them?

HOCHE. I bought them with the money I received from these waistcoats—for which he reproached me.

HULIN [*looking at him*]. Let me see. What's the matter? Have you been fighting again?

HOCHE. Yes.

HULIN. Barbarian! Where did you get that?

HOCHE. In the Place Louis XV. I was walking past. The arrogance of those Germans, camping here in our own Paris, got on my nerves. I could not help laughing at them. They fell upon me in a body, but the people there got me away from them. I made a mess of one or two, however.

HULIN. Indeed! That will cost you dear.

HOCHE. Bah! Do me a favor, Hulin. Read this letter for me.

HULIN. To whom is it addressed?

HOCHE. To the King.

HULIN. Are you writing to the King?

HOCHE. Why shouldn't I? He is a son of Adam,

like me. If I can give him some good advice, why shouldn't I? And why shouldn't he follow it?

HULIN [*jokingly*]. And what have you to say to the King?

HOCHE. I tell him to send his troops away from Paris, and to come himself to the city and start the revolution. [HULIN *laughs uproariously*. HOCHÉ *smiles*.] Your reasons are excellent. Thank you for your advice, but that is not what I want.

HULIN. What, then?

HOCHE [*embarrassed*]. The—the style, you see. And the spelling—I'm not quite sure.

HULIN. Do you imagine he is going to read it?

HOCHE. That makes no difference.

HULIN. I'll see to it, then.

HOCHE. How fortunate you are to have an education! Work as I will now, I can never make up for lost time.

HULIN. Are you really so simple as to think this letter will be read?

HOCHE [*good-humoredly*]. To tell the truth, I don't think it will. And yet it would be very easy for all those fellows who run the government of Europe, to apply just a little common sense, ordinary everyday sense! So much the worse for them! If they don't, it will be done without them!

HULIN. Instead of trying to reform the world, you'd do much better to get yourself out of the fix you're in now. You are going to be reported—perhaps you have been already. Do you know what will be waiting for you when you return to the barracks?

HOCHE. Yes, but do you know what is waiting for the barracks when I return to them?

HULIN. What?

HOCHE. You'll see.

HULIN. Now what are you plotting? Don't get excited. Don't you think there's enough disorder as it is?

HOCHE. When order is injustice, disorder is the beginning of justice.

HULIN. Justice! Justice consists in *not* demanding of things what they cannot give. You can't make over the world; you must accept it as it is. Why demand the impossible?

HOCHE. Poor Hulin, do you know everything that is impossible?

HULIN. What do you mean? Let the people do merely what they can do, and you will see whether or not the world can be made over!

HULIN [*his hand on HOCHÉ's shoulder*]. Ah, you are ambitious. You dream of dominating the people!

HOCHE. You ignorant colossus! Fine ambition, that! Do you think I have the spirit of a corporal? [*He looks at his uniform.*]

HULIN. Disgusted, eh? What's the matter with you? You seem very happy today. Are they going to make you a sergeant?

HOCHE [*shrugging his shoulders*]. Happiness is in the air.

HULIN. You're not hard to please. There is famine. Imminent massacre. Your people are about to be destroyed. And you, what are you going to do?

You will have to march against those you love, or else be killed with your friends.

HOCHE [*smiling*]. Very well, then.

HULIN. You think it very well? The thunderbolt is above you; everything is ready to crumble. . . . Roll, thunder! Truth, burn the night!

HULIN. I am not afraid of the storm. Everything I have told you, comrade, doesn't make me any more afraid. I am not afraid for my own skin. But I don't see even the first rain-drop. If your eyes are better than mine, show me! And wherever there is a good blow needed, be assured I shall be ready. Lead me, show me the road; what must I do?

HOCHE. There is no settled plan. Watch and see what happens. When the storm comes, hold fast and run with it. Meantime, let us proceed as usual—and sell our waistcoats. [*The Crowd again inundates the stage. Cries and laughter are heard. An Urchin of four or five is carried on the shoulders of a huge Porter. LA CONTAT, DESMOULINS, and the rest follow them, laughing.*]

THE URCHIN [*screaming*]. Down with the aristos, the aristocracks, the aristaustrians!

HULIN. Now what are they playing at? Ah, their favorite amusement: abusing the aristocrats.

THE PORTER. Attention, Voice of the People! What shall we condemn them to? Hey, there, Monsieur, don't you hear me, Leonidas? What'll we do to Artois?

THE URCHIN. The pillory!

THE PORTER. And Polignac?

THE URCHIN. A flogging!

THE PORTER. And Condé?

THE URCHIN. The gallows!

THE PORTER. And the Queen?

THE URCHIN. To the—! [*The Crowd bursts into loud laughter, cheering the Urchin, who cries aloud, inflated by his success. The Porter continues on his way with the boy.*]

LA CONTAT. The dear child! He makes me die laughing.

DESMOULINS. Let's follow them. Bravo, terror of the aristos!—Messieurs, young Leonidas has forgotten one of our friends, Monsieur de Vintimille, Marquis de Castelnau.

HULIN [*to HOCHÉ*]. Listen, he's speaking of my master.

DESMOULINS. We surely owe him something. The Marshal has just appointed him guard over the Bastille, with M. de Launey, and he has promised that within two days, we shall go and ask pardon of him, barefooted and with ropes round our necks. I propose that one of us make a present of his rope to that friend of the people.

THE CROWD. Burn him! He lives near! Burn his house—his furniture—his wife—his children!

VINTIMILLE [*appearing in the midst of the Crowd, cold and ironic*]. Messieurs—

LA CONTAT. God save us!

HULIN. Hoche! [*He takes hold of HOCHÉ's arm.*]

HOCHÉ. What's the matter?

HULIN. It's he! .

HOCHE. Who?

HULIN. Vintimille.

VINTIMILLE. Messieurs, M. de Vintimille's upholsterer asks permission to speak.

THE CROWD. Hear the upholsterer!

VINTIMILLE. Messieurs, you are quite right in wishing to burn that blackguard aristocrat, who makes game of you, despises you, and who goes about saying that dogs ought to be whipped when they show their teeth. Burn, Messieurs, by all means burn, but I warn you, take care that the flame of your just fury does not scorch you, and demolish what is yours along with what is his. Let me ask you first of all, Messieurs, whether it is right to ruin M. de Vintimille and those who ruin him—his creditors, that is? At least allow me to beg you to spare the furniture, which belongs to me, and for which the scoundrel has not paid a sou.

CROWD. Take back your furniture!

VINTIMILLE. I am encouraged, Messieurs, by the success of my request, to make another, this time on behalf of the architect of the house. He has been no more successful than I in extracting écus from the pocket of M. de Vintimille; and he asks you to consider what harm you would do him in destroying his only security?

CROWD. Save the house!

VINTIMILLE. And as for his wife, Messieurs—why burn what belongs to you? His wife is of the people. The Court, the city, the clergy, the middle-classes, have often appreciated her splendid qualities. She

possesses a liberal mind, and she recognizes no privileges: the three orders are equal in her eyes. In her person she realizes the perfect union of the nation. Let us do honor to so rare a virtue. Messieurs, let us show mercy for Madame.

DESMOULINS. Mercy for Notre Dame!

THE CROWD [*laughing*]. Yes, yes, mercy for Madame!

VINTIMILLE. Really, Messieurs, I am taking advantage—

THE CROWD. No, no!

VINTIMILLE. Finally, Messieurs, if you burned M. de Vintimille's children, would you not tremble to vie with our tragediennes?

THE CROWD [*laughing*]. Long live the children! Ha, ha!

VINTIMILLE [*in a changed tone*]. As for him, burn him, Messieurs, burn him, burn him. And, let me tell you, if you don't burn him, he will burn you! [*He steps down from the chair, and disappears into the Crowd, who laugh and shout, and applaud him.*]

LA CONTAT [*going quickly to VINTIMILLE*]. Run quickly! They might recognize you!

VINTIMILLE. Hello, Contat, were you there? What are you doing in such vile company?

LA CONTAT. Don't make fun of the dogs until you are well out of the village.

VINTIMILLE. Oh, not every barking dog bites. Come!

LA CONTAT. Later.

VINTIMILLE. I shall meet you at the Bastille.

LA CONTAT. Very well: at the Bastille. [VINTI-MILLE *goes out.*]

HOCHE. The rascal! What effrontery!

HULIN. A mixture of courage and nasty vileness.

HOCHE. Often to be observed in our "betters."

HULIN. This one made his fortune by marrying one of the late king's mistresses; and the same man wins honor at Crefeld and Rosbach.

AN OLD WOMAN SHOPKEEPER. What do you mean with your talk all the time of burning and hanging and stirring things up? What'll it bring you? I know well enough you'll not do a blessed thing about it. Then why talk so much? Will it make your soup taste better if you cook a few aristocrats? They'll run off with all their money and we'll be more miserable than ever. You see, you've got to take things as they come, and not believe those liars that tell you you can change things by shouting. D'ye know what I think? We're wasting our time here. Nothing's going to happen, nothing *can* happen. You're threatened with famine, war—the whole Apocalypse. I tell you, it's all invented by the newspapers that haven't anything else to print, and by spies who want to stir things up. There's just a misunderstanding with the king, but it'll be all right if we go about our business. We have a good king: he's promised to keep our good M. Necker, who's going to give us a Constitution. Why don't you believe it? Isn't that good common sense? Why isn't it, eh? I believe what they say, and I was just as foolish as you: I wasted four hours here. I'm going now and sell my turnips.

THE CROWD [*approvingly*]. She's right.—You're all right, mother. Let's go home.

HULIN. What have you to say to that?

HOCHE [*with a smile*]. She reminds me of my old aunt. She talked about patience the moment she set to beating me.

HULIN. I think she talked good common sense.

HOCHE. I ask nothing better than to be able to believe her; and I find it so natural that reason should prevail in her mind that if I listened to my own counsel, I should even allow my enemies to make reason triumph; but, you see, experience has too often disabused me. All I have to do is to open my eyes; I see Gonchon and his band closing shop. They do nothing without a motive, mind you, and I am very much afraid that this sudden quiet is only the lull before the storm. At base, no one believes that this calm is natural; they all stayed, even the old lady. They try to delude themselves, but they can't. They have all caught the fever. Listen to the voice of that crowd! They don't shout, but hear the murmurs! Like the rustling of leaves. The breeze before the rain. [*He seizes HULIN's hand.*] See! Look! Hulin—here, here—[*A great confused murmur comes from the Crowd at the back of the Garden, and then bursts forth like a clap of thunder.*]

A MAN [*out of breath, his hat gone, his clothing in disorder, runs in, and cries out in terror.*] Necker is exiled!

THE CROWD [*excitedly, hurrying to the Man*]. What! What! Necker!—It's a lie!

THE MAN [*shouting*]. Necker is banished! He's gone, gone!

THE CROWD [*howling*]. Kill him! He's a spy from Versailles! Kill him!

THE MAN [*terror-stricken, as he attempts to free himself.*] What are you doing? You don't understand! I say that Necker—

THE CROWD. To the fountain! The informer! Drown him!

THE MAN [*howling*]. Me?

HOCHE. Let's save him, Hulin!

HULIN. You'd have to strike down twenty to save one. [*They try in vain to break through the Crowd, which bears off the unfortunate Man. ROBESPIERRE then rises from the Crowd and stands on a table. He makes a gesture indicating that he wants silence.*]

HOCHE. Who is that thin little fellow who's trying to talk?

DESMOULINS. That is Robespierre, Deputy from Arras.

HOCHE. Shout, Hulin, and make them keep still!

HULIN. Listen! Listen to Citizen Robespierre! [*At first ROBESPIERRE trembles. He is not heard amid the confusion. Some cry, "Louder!"*]

DESMOULINS. Speak, Robespierre.

HULIN. Don't be afraid. [*ROBESPIERRE looks at him with a timid and disdainful smile.*]

DESMOULINS. He's not used to speaking.

HOCHE. Silence, comrades!

ROBESPIERRE [*composing himself*]. Citizens, I am Deputy to the Third Estate. I have come from Ver-

sailles. That man spoke the truth: Necker has been exiled. The power is now in the hands of the nation's enemies. De Broglie, Breteuil, Foulon: Carnage, Rapine, and Famine, are now the ministers. This means war. I have cast my lot with you.

THE CROWD [*terrified*]. We're lost!

DESMOULINS. What shall we do?

ROBESPIERRE. Let us know how to die.

HOCHÉ [*with a shrug*]. Lawyer!

HULIN. Speak to them, Citizen Deputy.

ROBESPIERRE. What is the use of talk? Let each one consult his own conscience.

HOCHÉ. They are mad with terror. If they're not made to do something, they are lost. [ROBESPIERRE *takes manuscripts and printers' proofs from his pocket.*]

HULIN. What's he going to read? Don't read! One really human word is worth a thousand from those papers!

ROBESPIERRE [*opens out his papers, and reads in a quiet, but cutting tone*]. "Declaration of Rights."

HOCHÉ. Listen!

ROBESPIERRE. "Declaration of Rights, proposed to the National Assembly, yesterday, Saturday July 11: The National Assembly proclaims abroad to the Universe and under the eye of the Supreme Being, the following rights of man and citizen:

Nature has made men free and equal—" [*A thunder of applause, which drowns out the rest of the sentence.*]

"Every man is born with inalienable and indefeasible

rights: liberty of thought, the care of his honor and his life, the complete freedom of his person, the pursuit of happiness, and resistance to oppression." [*The applause is redoubled.*]

HOCHE [*drawing his saber*]. Resistance to oppression! [*Others follow his example, and in a moment the Crowd bristle with arms.*]

ROBESPIERRE. "Oppression exists against the social order, when even a single member of it is oppressed. There exists oppression against each and every member of the social order, when the whole is oppressed."

GONCHON. Are they going on with this? They must be got out of the way. If the army comes, they ought to go somewhere else and get killed! [*He speaks to his associates.*]

ROBESPIERRE. "The Nation is sovereign." [*A shout is heard. The Crowd are terrified and listen in fear and trembling.*]

HOCHE. Hulin! The storm at last!

A VOICE [*terrified*]. They're coming! They're coming! The cavalry!

ONE OF GONCHON'S MEN [*in a strident voice*]. Run for your lives! [*Great confusion and shouting.*]

HULIN [*leaping upon the man who just shouted, and striking him on the head*]. Good God! [*To ROBESPIERRE.*] Continue! [*ROBESPIERRE tries to go on, but his voice fails him. HOCHÉ jumps up on the table beside ROBESPIERRE, and reads with enthusiasm, which stirs the Crowd.*]

HOCHE. "The Nation is sovereign, and the government is its work.—When the government violates the

rights of the nation, insurrection in that nation becomes the most sacred of duties.—Those who make war upon a people in order to arrest the progress of its liberty, ought to be attacked by all, not as ordinary enemies, but as rebel slaves who have lifted a hand against the Sovereign of the World, which is Mankind.” [*Amid the wild acclamations, DESMOULINS, hair waving in the wind and eyes aflame, jumps up on the table from which HOCHÉ has just stepped down.*]

DESMOULINS. Liberty, liberty! It is now flying just above our heads. It bears me along with its sacred whirlwind. On to victory! Let us march with the wind of her wings! The day of bondage has passed—passed. Stand up, and let us send back the thunderbolt against the scoundrels who have the army! Against the King! [*The Crowd shouts: “Against the King!”*] Look at me, spies! You are hidden here; I know. It is I, Camille Desmoulins, who incite Paris to revolt! I fear nothing: no matter what happens, they will never catch me alive. [*He displays a pistol which he has taken from his pocket.*] The only catastrophe I fear is to see France enslaved! But we shan’t see that! It will be free with us, or die with us. Yes, like Virginius we will stab her with our own hands, rather than allow her to be violated by tyrants. Brothers, we will be free! We are already free! Against the Bastilles of stone we will offer our breasts, the unconquerable fortresses of Liberty! Look! The very heavens open, the gods are on our side. The sun tears open the clouds. See, the leaves on the trees tremble for joy! Oh, leaves that quiver with the life-

blood of a people that is now awaking to life, be our rallying emblem, our pledge of victory; you are the color of hope, of the sea, of young and free Nature! [*He breaks off a small branch from a chestnut tree.*] *In hoc signo vinces.* Liberty! Liberty!

THE PEOPLE. Liberty! [*They crowd about DESMOULINS, embracing and kissing him.*]

LA CONTAT [*putting leaves in her hair*]. Oh, young Liberty! Bloom in my hair and flourish in my heart! [*She throws handfuls of leaves to the people.*] Friends, deck yourselves with the cockades of summer! [*The Crowd strip the trees of their leaves.*]

THE OLD WOMAN SHOPKEEPER. Against the King! He was right! You must go to the King!—On to Versailles, my children!

HULIN [*pointing to the OLD WOMAN and LA CONTAT*]. Now *they* are more excited than the rest!

HOCHE. You'll have a hard time stopping them!

THE PEOPLE. To the Champ de Mars! Before the people of Versailles! We'll show them!—Scoundrels! They thought they could down the people of Paris!

THE OLD WOMAN. I'll have their hides! I'll show those nasty Germans who's master!

DESMOULINS. They have banished our Necker. Now we banish them! We want Necker to remain. We will show the world what we want.

THE PEOPLE. Let's parade in honor of Necker!—Here's his portrait, in Curtius' shop, among the wax figures. Let's carry it in triumph!—The shop's closed!—Break it in!

GONCHON [*to his followers*]. Let's take advantage of the occasion!

A FOLLOWER OF GONCHON. Monsieur Gonchon! They're stealing everything!

GONCHON. Never mind! You do the same!

THE SHOPKEEPER. But they're coming into my shop!

GONCHON. Can't keep them out. [*He enters the shop and shouts with the rest of the Crowd. Those outside run here and there. In a moment, swords, sticks, pistols, and hatchets are seen flourishing in the air.*]

THE PEOPLE. Easy, now! No disorder, comrades! —Hey, there, run away to school, lad! This is no child's play! This must be serious! We must inspire the tyrants with the sacred terror of the nation. [*A bust of Necker is carried out of the shop, hugged close to the breast of the athletic Porter. The Crowd gather around him.*] Off with your hats! Here is our defender, our father! Cover him with crêpe! The Patrie is in mourning! [*GONCHON and his followers come forth from the shop with the bust of the Duc d'Orléans. They assume the same attitudes of solemn dignity as the others. The People pay no attention to them.*]

HULIN. What's that?

HOCHE. Our friend Gonchon's patron, the Citizen d'Orléans.

HULIN. I'm going to break in his head, and those of his bearers.

HOCHE [*smiling*]. No, no, let them be. Let them compromise themselves.

HULIN. Don't you know him?

HOCHE. An Orléans? He who knows one, knows them all. He's a vicious vermin, who has caught hold of the robes of Liberty, and tries to harm her. He needs a slap, and he will get it. Let him alone.

HULIN. But what if he take away our liberty?

HOCHE. That misshapen brat? He'd better take care that she doesn't take away his head! [GONCHON and his followers cover d'Orléans' head with crêpe. A procession then forms, in absurdly solemn order. Silence. All at once, the OLD WOMAN SHOPKEEPER comes in beating a drum. A formidable shout arises.]

THE PEOPLE. Forward! [*The procession starts. First comes the drummer, followed by Necker's bust, which the Porter carries on his head. He is surrounded by men armed with sticks and hatchets—young men, elegantly attired in silks, wearing jewels and watches, and armed with cudgels and swords; French Guards with drawn sabers; women, first among whom is LA CONTAT, clinging to DESMOULINS' arm. Then comes GONCHON, who carries Orléans' bust, followed by the shopkeepers of the Palais-Royal. Then the rest of the Crowd. A great silence, broken now and then by the low hum of the vast crowd. In the distance, shouting is heard; it grows nearer and nearer, and finally passes through the whole line like a tremor of passion. Then silence for a moment.*]

HOCHE [*to HULIN, pointing at the People*]. Well, Hulin, are you convinced now?

HULIN. Absurd. That disorderly mob! Attack

an army? They're all going to be massacred. There's no sense to it. [*He follows the procession.*]

HOCHE. Where are you going?

HULIN. With them, of course,

HOCHE. Old comrade, your instinct is better than your head.

HULIN. You see that, do you? Do you know where those blind people are going?

HOCHE. Don't bother about understanding. They know: they see for you.

HULIN. Who?

HOCHE. The blind. [*The lugubrious roll of the drums is heard in the distance. The People march out slowly. Silence.*]

ACT II

[Monday night, July 13-14. It is two or three o'clock in the morning.]

The scene is a street in Paris, in the Faubourg Saint-Antoine. At the back, towering above the house-tops, stands the great bulk of the Bastille, the turrets of which, engulfed in the black night, soar up into the sky, and seem to strain higher and higher as dawn approaches. To the right, at the corner of a street, is LUCILE's house. A convolvulus twines itself about the balcony support, and clambers along the wall. The street is lighted by candles, placed on the window-sills. Sounds from blacksmith shops—hammers pounding on forges, are heard, and from time to time the tocsin of a church, or occasionally a far-off musket-shot. Workingmen are constructing a barricade of wood and stone at the street corner, under LUCILE's window.]

A MASON. Only a few more stones now.

A WORKINGMAN [*with his bed on his back*]. Here, use this. It's my bed.

THE MASON. Are you sleeping here?

THE WORKINGMAN. I will before long, with a bullet in me.

THE MASON. You have a sense of humor.

THE WORKINGMAN. If the brigands pass here, we won't need anything. Our beds are made elsewhere.

A CARPENTER. Help me stretch this cord.

AN APPRENTICE. What for?

THE CARPENTER. To trip the horses.

A PRINTER. Hey, Camuset?

ANOTHER. Yes?

THE PRINTER. Listen.

THE OTHER. What?

THE PRINTER. Don't you hear?

THE OTHER. I hear anvils. They're making pikes in all the blacksmith shops.

THE PRINTER. No, not that. There— [*He points to the ground.*]

THE OTHER. There?

THE PRINTER. Yes, under the ground. [*He lies down, with his ear to the ground.*]

THE OTHER. You're dreaming!

THE WORKINGMAN [*lying down*]. Sounds like mining.

THE OTHER. Good Lord, they're going to blow us up!

THE CARPENTER [*incredulously*]. Nonsense!

THE WORKINGMAN [*still on the ground*]. They've hidden millions of pounds of powder there.

THE OTHER WORKINGMAN. That's why we can't find any.

THE CARPENTER. Do you think an army can go about underground like rats?

THE WORKINGMAN [*still on the ground*]. They've

got underground passages leading from the Bastille to Vincennes.

THE CARPENTER. Fairy tales!

THE OTHER WORKINGMAN [*rising*]. I'll have a look in the cellar, anyway. Are you coming with me, Camuset? [*They both go into a house.*]

THE CARPENTER [*laughing*]. In the cellar? Ha, ha! They're looking for a pretext to wet their whistles! Now, let's finish our work.

THE MASON [*looking behind him as he works*]. Good God!

THE CARPENTER. What's wrong?

THE MASON [*looking toward the Bastille*]. That—that! Every time I look at that thing, it weighs down on my back—that Bastille! It catches in my throat.

THE CARPENTER. One looks under ground, and the other in the air. Don't look around; go on with your work.

THE MASON. Makes no difference: I feel it. Like as if some one was standing behind me, with his fist raised ready to hit me.—Good God!

THE VOICE OF A BOURGEOIS. He is right: we are watched by cannon. What good is all this going to do us? In a flash it could knock that all down like a house of cards.

CARPENTER. Oh, no.

THE MASON [*pointing toward the Bastille*]. You damned monster! When are we going to get rid of you!

THE CARPENTER. Soon.

OTHERS. You think so?—How?

THE CARPENTER. I don't know, but it's so. Courage, now! It's a long lane that has no turning. [*They set to work again.*]

THE APPRENTICE. Meantime, we can't see a thing.

THE CARPENTER [*shouting toward the houses*]. Hey, up there! You women, look to your candles! We've got to see tonight!

A WOMAN [*at a window, re-lighting candles*]. How is everything getting along?

THE CARPENTER. Well, more than one will leave his carcass here before they get past.

THE WOMAN. Are they coming soon?

THE CARPENTER. They say Grenelle is running with blood. You can hear shots from the Vaugirard section.

THE OLD BOURGEOIS. They are waiting for daylight before entering.

THE MASON. What time is it?

THE WOMAN. Three. Listen, the cocks are crowing.

THE MASON [*wiping his brow with his sleeve*]. Got to hurry! Lord, how hot it is!

THE CARPENTER. So much the better.

THE OLD BOURGEOIS. I can't do another stroke.

THE CARPENTER. Rest a little, Monsieur. Nobody need work any more than he can.

THE OLD BOURGEOIS [*bringing a paving-block*]. I want to put this in place, though.

THE CARPENTER. Take it easier. If you can't gallop, trot.

THE WOMAN. Have you got your muskets yet?

THE CARPENTER. They keep putting us off at the Hôtel de Ville. A few hundred bourgeois there take everything.

THE MASON. Never mind. We have knives, and sticks and stones. Anything is good to kill with.

THE WOMAN. I've got a lot of tiles, broken bottles, and glass here in my room. Everything's near the window—dishes, furniture, everything. If they pass this way, I'll smash them!

ANOTHER WOMAN [*at her window*]. My kettle's been on the fire since dinner. The water's hot enough to boil paving-stones. Let them come! I'll boil them!

A VAGABOND [*with a gun, speaking to a Bourgeois*]. Give me some money.

THE BOURGEOIS. No begging here.

THE VAGABOND. I'm not asking for bread, though I am starving. But I have a musket, and not a sou to buy powder with. Give me some money.

ANOTHER VAGABOND [*a little drunk*]. I've got money, much as you like! [*He pulls a handful of money from his pocket.*]

FIRST VAGABOND. Where did you get that?

SECOND VAGABOND. I took it from the Lazarists when they pillaged the convent.

FIRST VAGABOND [*seizing the other by the throat*]. Do you want to dishonor the people, you pig?

SECOND VAGABOND [*trying to break away*]. What's matter? Are you crazy?

FIRST VAGABOND [*shaking him*]. Empty your pockets!

SECOND VAGABOND. But I—

FIRST VAGABOND [*emptying his pockets*]. Empty your pockets, you thief!

SECOND VAGABOND. Haven't we the right to rob the aristos any more, eh?

THE OTHERS. Hang him! Hang him!—Hang him on the sign-board!—A flogging is enough!—Ask pardon of the people!—Good!—Now, get out! [*The Vagabond runs away.*]

FIRST VAGABOND [*setting to work*]. He ought to have been hanged—for an example. There will be others like him. To be exposed to such nastiness—keep company with thieves! It's nasty.

CAMILLE DESMOULINS [*entering, in his usual absent-minded idle way*]. A spanking will be enough for you. [*They all laugh and set to work again.*]

THE PEOPLE. Well, let's finish this.

DESMOULINS [*looking at the house and the workers*]. My Lucile is there. I've just been to see her. The house was empty. They told me the family went out to dinner with relatives in the Faubourg Saint-Antoine. They've been blockaded!—Well, I should think so! A splendid fortification! Scarp and counter-scarp, everything perfect. They are besieging the house. But, my friends, we have to demolish the Bastille, and not construct another like it. I don't know what your enemies will think, but it is in any case dangerous to your friends: I've just gotten my feet tangled up in your strings, and I almost stayed where I was.—This cask won't stand. You must put back the paving-blocks.

THE CARPENTER. Do you work as well as you talk?

DESMOULINS [*gaily, as he takes up a block*]. I can

work, too. [*From the top of the barricade, where he now stands, he can touch the window of the house. A light is seen moving inside. DESMOULINS looks at it.*] She is there!

THE OLD BOURGEOIS. Provost Flesselles is a traitor. He pretends to be one of us, but he's in communication with Versailles.

THE MASON. He's the one who organized the Bourgeois Militia; it pretends to defend us, but it tries to tie our hands. They're all Judases, ready to sell us.

THE CARPENTER. That only teaches us not to depend on any one but ourselves. But I've known that for a long while. [*During the above, CAMILLE lightly taps the window, and calls "Lucile!" The light disappears, and the window opens. LUCILE's pretty face, with her lovely teeth and winning smile, appear at the window. Each puts his fingers to his mouth, a warning to be careful. They converse by means of lovers' signs. Each time the workers raise their heads from the barricade and look in her direction, Lucile quickly shuts the window. But two workmen catch sight of her.*]

A WORKINGMAN [*pointing to DESMOULINS*]. What's he doing anyway?

SECOND WORKINGMAN. The little fellow's in love. Don't bother him!

FIRST WORKINGMAN. He'll fight all the better for it. The rooster will defend his hen. [*They continue working, from time to time glancing up good-naturedly at the lovers. But they always observe caution, in order not to interrupt them.*]

LUCILE [*in an undertone*]. What are you doing there?

DESMOULINS. It's a fort to defend you. [*They look at each other and smile.*]

LUCILE. I can't stay any longer. My people are here.

DESMOULINS. Just one moment!

LUCILE. Later. When every one has gone. [*LUCILE listens.*] They're calling me. Wait. [*She blows a kiss at him and disappears.*]

THE MASON [*looking at the barricade*]. There, that's done—and well done, I may say.

THE CARPENTER [*slapping DESMOULINS on the shoulder*]. Don't work too hard: you'll come down with pleurisy.

DESMOULINS. Each one has his work, comrade. After all, this barricade here is the result of my talk.

THE MASON. What are you talking about?

THE CARPENTER. Do you work with your voice?

DESMOULINS. Was neither of you at the Palais-Royal yesterday?

THE CROWD. The Palais-Royal?—Listen to that! —Are you the little fellow who called us to arms, and gave us our cockades? Are you Monsieur Desmoulins? Wonderful speech!—How well you spoke! I cried! Fine little fellow!—Monsieur Desmoulins, let me shake hands with you!—Long live Monsieur Desmoulins! Long live our little Camille!

GONCHON [*enters, in the uniform of a Captain of the Bourgeois Militia, followed by his patrol.*] What the

devil are you doing there? What's all this talking! You're disturbing the peace! Make way, there! Go back home!

THE PEOPLE. There's that damned Bourgeois Guard again!—Down with them!—Disturb the peace? That's good!—We're defending Paris!

GONCHON. That's not your affair.

THE PEOPLE [*indignantly*]. Not our affair?

GONCHON [*with vehemence*]. That's not your affair. That's our business, and ours alone. We are the Permanent Committee on defense. Damn you, get out of here!

DESMOULINS [*coming close to him*]. Why, it's Gonchon!

GONCHON [*stumbling*]. Ten thousand devils! For God's sake, what sons of dogs have put up that thing, torn up the street, and stopped traffic! Knock that down, do you hear!

THE PEOPLE [*furiously*]. Knock down our barricade? Try it!

THE CARPENTER. Listen to me, Captain, and attend to what I say. We'll agree to go away and not question the Committee's orders, even though they're given by fools. There must be discipline in war-time; we're willing to submit, but if you touch one stone of our fortification, we'll smash the faces of you and the rest of your monkeys.

THE PEOPLE. Tear down our barricade?

GONCHON. Who said anything about tearing it down? Are we masons? We have something better to do. Make way now!

THE MASON [*in a menacing tone*]. We'll go, but you understand?

GONCHON [*with aplomb*]. I said no one would touch it. No back-talk, now! [*The workers disperse. DESMOULINS lags behind.*] Didn't you hear, you?

DESMOULINS. Don't you allow any privileges to your friends, Gonchon?

GONCHON. Oh, it's you, you damned spouter! Arrest that fellow!

ROBESPIERRE [*entering*]. Sacrilege! Who dares lift a hand against the founder of Liberty?

DESMOULINS. Ah, Robespierre! Thanks.

GONCHON [*releasing DESMOULINS—aside*]. A Deputy! The devil! [*Aloud.*] Very well. You see, it is my duty to keep order, and I will keep it in spite of everything.

ROBESPIERRE. Come with me, Camille. Our friends are meeting in this house tonight. [*He points to the house down-stage, left.*]

DESMOULINS [*aside*]. I can see Lucile's window from here! [*They go to the house, at the door of which, in an obscure entrance, a man is on guard. He is in his shirt sleeves, has bare legs, and carries a musket.*]

THE MAN. Who are you?

ROBESPIERRE. Robespierre.

THE MAN. I don't know you.

ROBESPIERRE. Deputy from Arras.

THE MAN. Show your card.

DESMOULINS. Desmoulins.

THE MAN. The little fellow with the cockade? Pass, comrade.

DESMOULINS [*pointing to ROBESPIERRE*]. He is with me.

THE MAN. Pass, you, too, citizen Robert Pierre.

DESMOULINS [*fatuously*]. Admire the power of eloquence, my friend! [*ROBESPIERRE looks at him with a bitter smile, sighs, and follows him without a word.*]

GONCHON [*going to THE MAN*]. What's going on here?

THE MAN. Make way!

GONCHON. What's that, you rascal? What are you doing here?

THE MAN [*emphatically*]. I am watching over the nation—over the thoughts of the nation.

GONCHON. What are you talking about? Have you any papers? Who stationed you here?

THE MAN. I.

GONCHON. Go home!

THE MAN. I am home. My home is the street. I have no home. You go home yourself. Get off my side-walk! [*He makes a step toward GONCHON with a threat.*]

GONCHON. Ah! No quarreling, now. I refuse to waste my time squabbling with a drunkard. Now, I shall continue on my rounds. These cursed vagabonds! And these barricades—they spring up out of the ground, like mushrooms; and the streets are full of these fellows! They think of nothing but fighting! If they were let alone, there would be no king tomorrow! [*He goes out with his men.*]

THE MAN. Look at those nasty scoundrels, those blue toads, those idiotic fools! Just because they're titled, they think they can make laws for free men! Bourgeois! The moment four of them gather together, they form committees and spoil good paper with their rules and regulations! "Show your papers!" As if we had to have their permission, their signatures, and the rest of it, to defend ourselves when we're attacked! Let every one protect himself! It's shameful to think a man has to let some one else defend him! They tried to make us give up our muskets, and throw us into prison. Can't do that! And those other fools, who think they're being betrayed, and at the first injunction, throw up a barricade out of respect for the constituted authorities and the moneyed classes! They're used to serving, and I suppose they can't get over their old habits in a day. Luckily, there are other wandering dogs like me, who haven't any home, and respect nothing. Well, I'll stay here and keep guard. By God, they won't take our Paris! Never mind if I haven't a thing to my name, it belongs to us all, and we're going to hold on to it. Yesterday, I didn't have any idea of all this. What was this city to me, where I hadn't a blessed hole to crawl into when it rained, or a place to get a crust of bread? What did I care about it? What did I care about any one's happiness or sorrow? But now everything's changed. I've got a part to play; I feel that everything belongs just a little to me: their houses, their money, and their thoughts—I must watch over them; they are working for me. Everybody is equal, equal and free. God, I

always felt that, but I couldn't say it. Free! I'm a vagabond, I'm hungry, but I don't care: I'm free. Free! It makes my chest swell, it does! I'm a king. I could walk over the world. [*He becomes excited as he talks, striding back and forth.*] It's like as if I was drunk; my head's turned—though I haven't drunk a drop. What is it? It's glory!

HULIN [*coming from the house*]. I was stifling in there. I must get out.

THE MAN. Eh, Hulin, what are they doing?

HULIN. Talking, talking. The damned gossips. They're never at a loss for something to say. Desmoulins is making jokes and spouting Latin. Robespierre, with his long face, declares he'll sacrifice himself. They're calling everything into question: laws, the social contract, reason, the origin of the world. One is making war on God, and the other on Nature. As to real war plans, how to protect themselves against danger, not a word! Their counsel is like that in Paris: when it rains, why let it rain!—Devil take these phrasemakers!

THE MAN. Don't blame them. It's a fine thing to be able to speak. I tell you, there are words he uses, that catch you way-down inside. They make the shivers run up your spine. They make you cry, they'd make you even kill your father; and they make you feel as strong as the whole world; make you feel like the good God Himself. Each man has his own work to do. They do the thinking for us; we've got to do our part for them.

HULIN. What do you want to do? Look. [*He indicates the Bastille.*]

THE MAN. Lights on the left tower. They're not sleeping any more than we, up there. They're fixing up their cannon.

HULIN. What do you intend to do with them? You can't resist them.

THE MAN. That remains to be seen.

HULIN. What do you mean?

THE MAN. I mean, that remains to be seen. Two small make one great.

HULIN. You are an optimist.

THE MAN. It's my character.

HULIN. It doesn't seem to have agreed with you, however.

THE MAN [*good-naturedly*]. But I am naturally an optimist. Luck and I are not close relatives. As long as I can remember, I never got anything I wanted. [*Laughing.*] Good Lord, I've had bad luck enough in my life! Everything isn't pleasure; life is a mixture. But I don't care: I'm always hoping, and sometimes I'm wrong. This time, Hulin, something good's come to me. The wind has shifted, and luck is with us.

HULIN [*chaffingly*]. Luck? You'd better ask it to warm you up a bit first.

THE MAN [*looking at his naked feet*]. I'd rather wear these shoes than the King's. I'd go this way to Vienna or Berlin, if necessary, to teach those kings a lesson.

HULIN. Haven't you enough to do here?

THE MAN. That won't last forever. When we're

through here, and have cleaned up Paris and France, why not go the lot of us, arm-in-arm, soldiers, bourgeois, Tom, Dick, and Harry, and clean up Europe? We aren't selfish: we don't want all the fun for ourselves. You know, every time I learn something new, I want to tell it to others. Ever since these things began to stir in me—Liberty, and all this damned fine stuff—I feel I've just got to tell it to everybody, and spout it everywhere. God, if the others are like me, we'll do great things. I can already see the ground trembling under our feet, and Europe boiling like wine in a vat. People are falling on our necks. It's like little brooks rushing down to meet the river. We're a great river, washing everything clean.

HULIN. Say, are you sick?

THE MAN. I? I'm as well as a cabbage.

HULIN. And yet you dream?

THE MAN. All the time. It's good, too. If you dream enough, you end by getting something of what you're dreaming about. Hey, Hulin, what do you say? Won't it be a fine march? Aren't you coming with us?

HULIN. As soon as you've taken Vienna and Berlin, I'll keep watch over them.

THE MAN. Don't joke. Who knows?

HULIN. Anything can happen—

THE MAN. Anything you wish for happens.

HULIN. Meantime I'd like to know what's going to happen right now.

THE MAN. That's hard to tell. How are we going about it? We'll see. Sufficient unto the hour is the work thereof.

HULIN. These French devils are all alike. They think of what may happen in a hundred years, and not of the next day.

THE MAN. Perhaps. But then others will think of us in a hundred years.

HULIN. Much good that does you!

THE MAN. My bones thrill already! What troubles me is that in history they won't know my name.

HULIN. You're vain!

THE MAN. Well, I love glory.

HULIN. It's a fine thing, of course. The only trouble is that you can't enjoy it until you're dead. A good pipe is better. [VINTIMILLE enters right.]

VINTIMILLE. The streets are empty. Two vagabonds talking about glory. A little mound of broken furniture, put there by a lot of epileptics. So this is the great revolution! A patrol of guards is enough to put the rabble in its place. What are they waiting for at Versailles?

THE MAN [*getting up quickly and going to VINTIMILLE*]. What's he want?

VINTIMILLE [*ironically, as he glances at THE MAN*]. Is this a new uniform of the Archers? Get out of here, old man!

THE MAN. Who are you? Where are you going at this hour?

VINTIMILLE [*handing him a paper*]. Can you read?

THE MAN. Papers? Of course, I can read. [To HULIN.] You read them. What is it?

HULIN [*after having read*]. A pass. It's all right.

Signed by the Committee of the Hôtel de Ville. Countersigned by the Captain of the Bourgeois Militia, Gonchon.

THE MAN. Good joke! Anybody can buy those.
[*He grumblyingly allows VINTIMILLE to pass.*]

VINTIMILLE. Of course! Everything can be bought.
[*As he turns to go, he throws a coin at THE MAN.*]

THE MAN [*on the alert*]. What! What's that?

VINTIMILLE [*without turning*]. You see. Take it and keep your mouth shut.

THE MAN [*running to VINTIMILLE and blocking his way*]. So you're an aristoerat? You're trying to bribe me?

HULIN [*interposing*]. Don't, comrade, don't. I know him very well. [*He goes to VINTIMILLE.*]

VINTIMILLE [*casually*]. Why, it's—

HULIN. Hulin.

VINTIMILLE. Of course. [*A moment's silence. They look at each other.*]

HULIN [*to THE MAN*]. Let him pass.

THE MAN [*furiously—shouting*]. He wanted to bribe me—he wanted to buy my conscience!

VINTIMILLE. Your conscience? What should I do with it? The idea! I pay for favors done me. Quick! Take it.

THE MAN. I'm not doing favors! I'm doing my duty.

VINTIMILLE. Then it's to pay you for doing your duty. What do I care?

THE MAN. You don't pay people for doing their duty. I am free!

VINTIMILLE. Your duty and your liberty won't feed you. I refuse to argue. Hurry up, now; money is always good, no matter how one gets it. Don't stand there like that; you know you want it. I know you'll end by taking it. I suppose you want more, eh? How much do you want, free man?

THE MAN [*who has several times been on the point of taking the money, jumps upon VINTIMILLE. HULIN pulls him away*]. Let me go, Hulin! Let me go!

HULIN. Stop it!

THE MAN. I've got to kill him!

VINTIMILLE. What's this!

THE MAN [*held back by HULIN, says to VINTIMILLE*]. Get out! Why did you come here, anyway? I was happy, I didn't realize how poor I was. I was free, master of everything. You remind me that I'm hungry, that I haven't a thing, that I don't belong to myself, that a filthy scoundrel can be my master by means of a little money that makes a slave of me because I need it. You've spoiled all my happiness. Get out!

VINTIMILLE. What a to-do for so little! Who gives a damn about your scruples? I'm not asking anything of you. Take it!

THE MAN. I'd rather starve.—You give it to me, Hulin. [*VINTIMILLE gives the money to HULIN, who drops his hand. The money falls to the ground, and THE MAN picks it up.*]

HULIN. Where are you going?

THE MAN. Get drunk—and forget.

VINTIMILLE. Forget what?

THE MAN. That I'm not free. Dirty scoundrel!
[*He goes out.*]

VINTIMILLE. The pest! There's nothing quite so bad as a rascal like that who develops his self-respect, and is without means to preserve it. Good evening, my boy, and thank you.

HULIN. Thank you. I didn't mention your name, because you'd never have escaped alive. It would have been disloyal of me, and I am an honest man. Anyway, I dislike violence, and I don't believe in revolution. But I am not one of you, and I don't care to bring harm to my comrades. What are you doing here?

VINTIMILLE. You are inquisitive!

HULIN. I beg your pardon, but you are playing with death. Do you realize how people hate you?

VINTIMILLE. I have just been to see my mistress. Shall I change my habits for the sake of two or three madmen?

HULIN. There are more than you imagine.

VINTIMILLE. So much the better. The more numerous and insolent they are, the better, say I.

HULIN. Better for whom?

VINTIMILLE. For us. Our age is rotten with sentimentality. You don't dare do a thing. One dare not give an order for fear of offending this damned liberty of the populace—and shedding a few drops of blood. This effeminaey is the cause of all the disorders of the kingdom. The only cure for so much evil is more evil. A good uprising is what we need. That will be a splendid reason and pretext for putting

them in their place. We are ready. We can do it in a day, and we won't be troubled again for a good fifty years with these insane ravings of philosophers and cheap lawyers.

HULIN. So then, a revolution would do that for you? You don't object to the people having a grand butchery? A few crimes, eh?

VINTIMILLE. Why not? Something that will create quite a disturbance.

HULIN. What if they began with you?

VINTIMILLE. The idea!

HULIN. Do you know what I'd like to do this instant?

VINTIMILLE. No.

HULIN. Don't provoke me!

VINTIMILLE. But you wouldn't do anything, my friend. You are an honest man!

HULIN. What do you know about that? I said I was; I was boasting.

VINTIMILLE. No, no, but you are now. Even if you had said nothing, I could have seen it in your face.

HULIN. Is that a reason why I shouldn't inform on you if I like.

VINTIMILLE. Certainly. You must pay for your honesty by sacrifice. What would you think of yourself, Hulin, if you betrayed me? Would you not lose forever that invaluable possession: your self-esteem? It's not so easy as you think to go against your conscience. As you say, you are an honest man. Good-by. [*He goes.*]

HULIN. He's making game of me. He knows me.

—It's true, those villains will always have the better of us honest people, because they're used to giving orders, and we are not. Then why remain honest, if it's all a fraud? Because we can't do otherwise. Well, it's better so. I couldn't breathe if I were as morally rotten and nasty as they are! I know they'll get the better of us. The day is at hand. But it would have been wonderful to win. They're going to crush us! [*He shrugs his shoulders.*] And—after? [*In the distance is heard the joyous voice of HOCHÉ, answered by the acclamations of the Crowd. Windows are thrown wide open, and people lean out to see. DESMOULINS, ROBESPIERRE, and their friends come forth from the café where they have been meeting.*]

HOCHÉ [*enters laughing, and shows his comrades the fortifications*]. Look at this. What Vauban built it, eh? Fine fellows! I could kiss you all! What work they must have put into it! And why? Against whom? Your friends? The enemy will never come. Don't worry.

THE PEOPLE. Long live the French Guards! [*MARAT runs to HOCHÉ, and bars his way with outstretched arms.*]

MARAT. Stop, soldier! Not another step. [*The Crowd, astonished, press around them to see.*]

DESMOULINS. What's the matter with him? Has he lost his head?

HULIN. Yes, long ago!

MARAT. Surrender your saber! Every one give up his arms!

DESMOULINS. He'll cut himself.

THE FRENCH GUARDS. What's that!—Give up my saber?—I'll give it to you in the belly!

THE PEOPLE. Kill him!

HOCHE. Silence! Let me explain. I know him.—Let me go, friend!

MARAT [*standing on the tips of his toes to take HOCHÉ by the collar*]. Give up your saber!

HOCHE [*quietly freeing himself, and taking hold of MARAT, who squirms*]. What are you going to do with it, son?

MARAT. Keep you from thrusting it into the heart of Liberty.

HOCHE. Do you suspect those who have come to shed their blood for the people?

MARAT. Who guarantees your loyalty? Why should we have confidence in unknown soldiers?

THE FRENCH GUARDS. Break his head, Hoche! [*HOCHÉ quiets them with a gesture, looks smilingly at MARAT, and releases him.*] He is right. Why have confidence in us? He has never seen us at work. [*MARAT, with not a word to say, suddenly assumes an attitude of silent impassiveness.*] Good Lord, it is hard to let yourself be accused when you're risking death for those birds!

HOCHE. Why, he doesn't know us. That makes no difference. [*Good-naturedly.*] But you're mistaken. Marat, you have done well to take such precautions for the people. [*To the People.*] We'll understand each other in a moment. A glance will prove that we are all good fellows, and believe in one another. But he is wise and has given us a lesson in prudence:

this is war-time, and you have the right to demand an account from every one. No one can be excepted.

THE PEOPLE. We know you, Hoche, you're a friend!

HOCHE. Be careful with your friends. [*Smiling*]. That doesn't refer to me. Your uncertain position does not make many friends for you, and what few you have, are not dangerous. But when you become powerful, you will see them flock to you; then you must keep your eyes open.

THE FRENCH GUARDS. That's good advice.—Be prudent, that's right! Trust no one!

HOCHE [*laughing*]. When two eyes please me, I ask nothing more. But I'm a fool, and that's my affair. You have to save the world. Don't imitate me. We are only a few hundred French Guards. Our officers, who know our sympathies for the people, tried to send us to Saint-Denis, away from you. But we left our barracks and now we offer our sabers to you. In order to reassure Marat, divide yourselves into groups of ten or twenty; then each group takes its place in a people's battalion. Then you will be our masters, and we can lead you and train you. Will you come with me, Marat? We can each learn something from the other. You'll see that there are still brave men; and perhaps you will teach me to hunt down traitors—though I think your labor will be lost. [MARAT, *whose eyes have been glued on HOCHÉ, goes to him and offers his hand.*]

MARAT. I was mistaken.

HOCHE [*takes his hand and smiles*]. How tiresome it must be to suspect people! I'd rather die.

MARAT [*sighing*]. So would I. But as you said just now, it is not for us, but for the nation.

HOCHE. Continue to keep a sharp watch over the people. I don't envy you: my task is much easier.

MARAT [*looking at HOCHÉ*]. Oh, Nature, if the eyes and voice of this man lie, there is no honesty! Soldier, I have offended you before every one. And before every one, I ask your pardon.

HOCHE. But you didn't offend me. No one knows better than I what a military chief is, and what dangers beset the cause of Liberty. Military discipline makes every man a slave; men cannot like it: we abhor it as much as you do. We have ourselves just broken the blind power that was in our hands. Open your arms to us, make room for us at your tables, give us back our lost liberty, our cramped consciences, our right to be men like you, your equals and your brothers. Soldiers, become again part of the People. And you, People, all of you, become the Army; defend yourselves, defend us, and defend our souls, which are being attacked. Give us your hands, embrace us, let us be but one heart. You are all of you our friends. All of us for all of us!

THE PEOPLE and the SOLDIERS [*in an ecstasy of fraternal enthusiasm, laughing, crying, embracing one another*]. Yes, for you, for you! Our brothers the people! Our soldier brothers!—For all who suffer! For the oppressed!—For all mankind! [*The enthusiasm waxes into a pandemonium, and is increased with*

cries and cheers from the windows of the neighboring houses.]

HULIN. Hurrah! Hoche! At last, some one who dispels the sadness!

HOCHÉ [*amiably, to the people who acclaim him from the windows*]. What are you doing there at home? Why shut yourselves in on a beautiful July night like this? Man is sad when he is alone. It is the fetid air of the cellar that breeds suspicion and doubt. Come forth from your houses; you've been shut up too long. You must live now in the open streets. Come out and watch the sun rise. The enslaved city now breathes freely; the cool winds from the prairies are blowing over the houses and the streets that are blocked by our armies; they bring us the salute from the friendly countryside. The grain is ripe, come and reap it.

LA CONTAT. What a splendid fellow! He breathes joy and happiness. [*She goes toward HOCHÉ.*]

HOCHÉ. Ah, there you are, you flower-girl of Liberty! Madame Royalist, who stripped the trees of the Palais-Royal and threw cockades to the people. I knew you would come. Do you at last believe in our cause?

LA CONTAT. I believe in anything you say. With a face like yours—[*she points to his face*] I could always be converted. [*The People laugh.*]

HOCHÉ [*laughing*]. I'm not surprised. I always knew I had an apostolic temperament. Well, take your place, then. We won't refuse any one. Take a pike: a girl like you ought to defend herself.

LA CONTAT. Oh, oh, don't enroll me so quickly! I look on, I applaud, and I find the piece interesting, but I'm not playing this evening.

HOCHE. So you think it's merely interesting? You think it is play? Look at this poor devil, his bones sticking out of his blouse, and this woman nursing her child. Is it amusing to see them starve? You think it a good comedy to see these people, without bread, without a future, thinking only of humanity, and of eternal justice? Don't you think it's at least as serious as a Corneille tragedy?

LA CONTAT. That, too, is only a play.

HOCHE. Nothing is play. Everything is serious. Cinna and Nicomède exist, just as I do.

LA CONTAT. You are strange! Actors and authors construct make-believe things, which you accept as gospel!

HOCHE. You're mistaken, it isn't make-believe for you: you don't know yourself.

LA CONTAT. You make me laugh! Do *you* know me?

HOCHE. I've seen you on the stage.

LA CONTAT. And do you imagine I *feel* what I act?

HOCHE. You can't deny it: your instinct makes you feel. A power is never an illusion; it carries you along. I know better than you what it does to you.

LA CONTAT. What?

HOCHE. What is strong goes with what is strong. You will be one of us.

LA CONTAT. I don't think so.

HOCHE. What difference? There are only two

parties in the world: the healthy and the sick. What is healthy goes with life. Life is with us. Come!

LA CONTAT. With you—willingly.

HOCHE. So you won't decide! Very well, we'll see later on, if we have time to think.

LA CONTAT. There is always time for love.

HOCHE. You've been made to think that too often. Do you think our revolution is going to be merely some gallant little story? Ah, you little women! During the fifty years you have been governing France, and had everything brought you, done for you, did it never enter your heads that there might be something more important than your dainty selves? Play is over and done with, Madame. This is a serious game, in which the stake is the world itself. Make way for the men! If you dare, follow us to battle, help us, share our faith, but, by God, don't dare try to shake it. You count for very little beside it. I'm not angry, Contat! I have no time for a flirtation, and as for my heart, it already belongs to some one else.

LA CONTAT. To whom?

HOCHE. To Liberty.

LA CONTAT. I'd like to know what she looks like.

HOCHE. She is a little like you, I imagine. Very healthy, well-built, blonde, passionate, audacious, but rouged like yourself, with beauty-spots—ironic, too; but she *does*, instead of making fun of those who do; and instead of making double-meaning phrases, she breathes words of devotion and fraternity. I am her lover. When you are like her, I will love you. That is all I have to say.

LA CONTAT. I like her, and I will have you. Now, to battle! [*She snatches a musket from one of the People, and declaims with great warmth, a few lines from "Cinna":*

"Thou need'st fear no success which shames thy name!
For good and evil both are for thy glory,
And though the plot's reveal'd and thou dost die,
Thy honor's still intact. Think but of Brutus
And valiant Cassius, are their names obscured?
Did these two heroes perish with their plots?
Are they not honored with the greatest Romans?

Go, follow them, where honor bids you tread!"

She rushes into the arms of the People, who wildly applaud her.]

HOCHE. Splendid! Let Corneille be our guide!
Wave the torch of heroism before our eyes!

HULIN. Where are you going?

HOCHE. Where are we going? [*He raises his eyes, and looks at the house of little JULIE who, partly dressed, leans out the window, excited and joyous.*]
Ask that little woman. I want her to give the answer which is in all our hearts. You innocent little one, be our voice, and tell us where we are going?

JULIE [*leaning far out of the window, but kept from falling by her mother,—shouting at the top of her voice*]. To the Bastille!

THE PEOPLE. To the Bastille! [*The Crowd is at the highest pitch of excitement. They gather into little groups—workingmen, bourgeois, students, and women.*]
The Bastille! The Bastille! Break the yoke! At last! Down with that stupid mass! Monu-

ment of our defeat and degradation! The tomb of those who dare speak the truth!—Voltaire's prison!—Mirabeau's prison!—The prison of Liberty! Let's breathe!—Monster, you will fall! We'll pull down every stone of you! Down with the murderer! Coward!—Cut-throat! [*They shake their fists at the Bastille, and shout until they are hoarse. HULIN, ROBESPIERRE, and MARAT wildly wave their arms, and try to make themselves heard above the clamor. It is seen that they disapprove of what the People are doing, but their voices are drowned out.*]

HULIN [*at last making himself heard*]. You're mad, mad, I tell you! We'll only break ourselves against that mountain!

MARAT [*his arms crossed*]. I really marvel at you! Giving yourselves all this trouble to free a handful of aristocrats! Don't you know that there are only a few rich men in there? It's a luxurious prison, made especially for them. Let them mind their own affairs. That doesn't concern you.

HOCHE. Every sort of injustice concerns us. Our Revolution is not a family matter. If we are not rich enough to have relations in the Bastille, we can at least adopt the rich people who are as unfortunate as we. Every man who suffers unjustly is a brother.

MARAT. You are right.

THE PEOPLE. We want the Bastille!

HULIN. But, you fools, how are you going to take it? We have no weapons, and they have!

HOCHE. Of course. Let us take the weapons, then. [*Confusion at the back of the stage.*]

A WORKINGMAN [*running in*]. I've just come from the Left Bank. They're all on the move: in the Place Maubert, La Basoche, La Montagne Sainte-Genève. They're marching against the Invalides to seize the weapons there—thousands of muskets! The French Guards, monks, women, students, a whole army. The King's Attorney and the Curé de Saint-Etienne-du-Mont are marching at their head.

HOCHE. You were asking for weapons, Hulin. There they are.

HULIN. You can't take the Bastille with a few hundred old arquebuses, or even a few good cannon from the Invalides. You might as well try to split a rock open with a knife.

HOCHE. No, the Bastille can't be taken with cannon, but it will be taken.

HULIN. How?

HOCHE. The Bastille must fall, and fall it will. The gods are with us.

HULIN [*with a shrug*]. What gods?

HOCHE. Justice, Reason. Bastille, you will fall!

THE PEOPLE. You will fall!

HULIN. I'd rather see a few real allies. I don't believe in it. Never mind, it shall never be said that any one got ahead of me. I'll even be the first to march against it. Perhaps you know better than I what must be done, but I'll do it. So, you want to attack the Bastille, you fools? Forward!

HOCHE. By God, you can do anything simply by saying it's possible! [GONCHON *returns with his patrol*.]

GONCHON. Still here! The damned vermin! Chase them from one place and they go to another. So this is how you obey me? Didn't I command you to go home? [*Taking a man by the collar.*] You heard me! I know you, you were here before! You rascal, I've had enough of you, and I'm going to arrest you. I'll arrest you all. It's our business to maintain order. Every citizen abroad at night without a passport is open to suspicion.

HOCHE [*laughing*]. The beast wants to cheat the people!

MARAT. Who is this traitor who pretends to speak for the People? By what right does his odious voice give orders to the Nation? I know that big fellow, with a face like Silenus, puffy from long indulgence, and sweating from debauchery. Does this monopolist believe he has a monopoly over our Revolution? Can he lord it over us as he does over his Palais-Royal orgies? Get out, or I will arrest you in the name of the Sovereign People!

GONCHON [*stammering*]. I—I am the representative of power. I have been appointed by the Central Committee.

THE PEOPLE. We are the power! We appoint the Central Committee! You obey us!

MARAT [*with an air of ferocity which is at bottom nothing more than a sinister buffoonery, assumed to terrify GONCHON*]. We must be careful with these traitors, who associate with the people only in order to betray them. Hoche has well said that if we are not on the lookout, we shall be overpowered. I think

that in order to distinguish those who are the valets of the aristocrats from the others, we ought to cut off their ears, or rather their thumbs. It is a prudent and indispensable measure. [*The People laugh.*]

GONCHON [*tremblingly, to HOCHÉ*]. Soldier, it is your business to support the law—

HOCHÉ. That's your business. They won't hurt you. Go ahead, we shall follow.

GONCHON. Follow me? Where?

HOCHÉ. To the Bastille.

GONCHON. What!

HOCHÉ. Of course. We are going to take the Bastille. Are you not defending the people, you Bourgeois Militia? Then take you places in the front ranks. Fall in, and don't stop to argue. You don't seemed pleased with the prospect? [*Speaking into GONCHON's ear.*] I know your tricks, old man; you are in communication with the Duc d'Orléans. Now, not a word, and march straight ahead. I am keeping my eye on you, and I have only to say the word to Marat. It's not day yet, and you might light the way for us, hanging from one of those lamp-posts!

GONCHON. Let me go home!

HOCHÉ. Choose: be hanged or take the Bastille.

GONCHON [*quickly*]. Take the Bastille! [*The People laugh.*]

HOCHÉ. Brave man! And now, the people will not allow the Montagne Sainte-Genève to outwit us. Let Saint-Antoine not remain idle while Saint-Jacques does her share! Ring your bells, beat your drums,

and call out the citizens. [*To the Electors and Deputies.*] You, citizens, guard the Hôtel de Ville, and see that no treachery is done. Take charge of the bourgeois! Now, we'll gag the beast. [*Points to the Bastille. Little JULIE has meanwhile come from the house with her mother, and stands in the doorway. She then stands on a post to see better, and looks at HOCHÉ in silent and passionate admiration. HOCHÉ looks at her and smiles.*] Well, little one, do you want to come, too? Consumed with envy, aren't you? [*She holds out her trembling arms to him, nodding, but says nothing.*] Then come! [*He takes her on his shoulder.*]

THE MOTHER. You're mad! Put her down! You're not going to take her into the fight?

HOCHÉ. She is sending us into the fight! She is our standard-bearer!

THE MOTHER. Don't take her from me!

HOCHÉ. You come, too, mother! No one should stay at home today. The snail must come forth from its shell. The whole city is freed from prison today. We leave nothing behind. This isn't an army at war, it is an invasion.

THE MOTHER. Indeed, it is. If we must die, it's better to die all together.

HOCHÉ. Die? Nonsense. You don't die when you expect death! [*The sky begins to brighten behind the houses and the solid mass of the Bastille.*] At last! Day is breaking. The new day, the dawn of Liberty!

JULIE [*who, seated on HOCHÉ's shoulders, has been all smiles, excited and quiet, and with a finger to her*

lips, begins singing one of the national songs of the day] :

“ Oh, come, Thou god of Liberty
And fill our souls this day—”

HOCHE [*laughing*]. Do you hear the little sparrow? [*The People laugh.*] Come, then, with light hearts. Let us march ahead of the sun! [*He takes up JULIE's song, and begins marching. All the People join in the song. A little flute carries the air. Shouts and enthusiastic cheering resound; bells ring. GONCHON and his trembling Militia are urged on by the jeering crowd, among which LA CONTAT and HULIN are distinguished. Men and women come forth from the houses and join the throng. A tempest of joy. As the People file off, DESMOULINS, following them a way, returns, quickly mounts the barricade, goes to LUCILE's window, and looks in. During the rest of the act, the noise of the crowd is heard in the distance. A few people continue to come from the houses, but they pay no attention to the lovers.*]

CAMILLE [*in an undertone*]. Lucile! [*The window softly opens, and LUCILE appears, then puts her arm about CAMILLE's neck.*]

LUCILE. Camille! [*They kiss.*]

CAMILLE. You were there!

LUCILE. Sh! They're sleeping in the next room. I was hidden in there. I stayed all the while. I heard and saw everything.

CAMILLE. Didn't you go to bed at all?

LUCILE. How could I sleep with all that noise? Oh, Camille, how they cheered you!

CAMILLE [*pleased*]. Did you hear them?

LUCILE. The windows shook with it. I smiled to myself in my corner. I wanted to shout, too. I couldn't, so I just stood up on a chair—guess what I did?

CAMILLE. How can I guess?

LUCILE. Guess—if you love me. If you didn't feel anything, then you don't love me. What did I send you?

CAMILLE. Kisses.

LUCILE. You do love me! Yes, I did. Whole basketfuls. Some of them went to those who were cheering you. How they cheered! How famous you've become, my Camille, in one day! Last week, your Lucile was the only person who knew you, who realized how great you were. But today, a whole people—

CAMILLE. Listen! [*They hear the joyful cries of the People.*]

LUCILE. That's all your work.

CAMILLE. I can't believe it myself.

LUCILE. Just by what you said! How did you do it? They told me every one was mad with excitement. I wish I had been there!

CAMILLE. I really don't know what I said. I felt as if I were lifted up into the air. I heard my own voice and saw my gestures exactly as if they belonged to some one else. Every one cried—and I cried with the rest. Then after I finished, they carried me on their shoulders. I never saw anything like it.

LUCILE. My great man, my Patru, my Demosthenes! And you were able to speak before that great

crowd? Weren't you at all nervous? Didn't you forget what you were going to say? You didn't do as you—sometimes do—?

CAMILLE. What?

LUCILE. You know—like—like a bottle that's too full—and the water can't come out—? [*She laughs.*]

CAMILLE. That's unkind of you! And you show your little teeth like a cat.

LUCILE [*laughing*]. No, no, you know I love you; I love you just as you are. Don't be angry. I see your faults, I even look for them, but I love them. I love your stammering, and I even imitate you. [*They laugh.*]

CAMILLE. Just see what one day has done to these people! What can't we expect of them now! Oh, my Lucile, what wonderful things we shall do together! Now it's started, the thunderbolt is launched; what joy to see it strike here and there, and lay low the tyrants—prejudice, injustice, laws! At last, we are going to smash these maggots, who with their idiotic grins, set themselves up against everything, prevent our thinking, breathing, our very existence! We are going to clean house, and burn the old rags. No more masters, no more shackles! How amusing it all is!

LUCILE. We will rule Paris now?

CAMILLE. We will: Reason will.

LUCILE. Hear their shouting. It makes me afraid.

CAMILLE. That is the result of my words.

LUCILE. Do you think they'll always listen to you?

CAMILLE. They listened to me before they knew me; what power I must have now that they adore me!

They are good people, and when they are at last rid of all the evils that are bearing down on them, everything will be easy and joyous. Oh, Lucile, I am too happy! It's all come so suddenly. No, I'm not *too* happy; that is impossible. But I feel a little intoxicated, after being so miserable.

LUCILE. Poor Camille! Were you so very unhappy?

CAMILLE. Yes, I have had a hard time, and for so long—six years. Without money, without friends, without even hope. I was disowned by my own people, I had to engage in the lowest professions, and turn my hand to anything to earn a few sous—and often not getting them after all. More than once I went to bed without supper. But I don't want to tell you that. Later on— It was wrong of me.

LUCILE. Is it possible? Heavens, why didn't you come to—?

CAMILLE. You would, I know, have divided your bread with me! That wasn't the worst, Lucile. I could do without supper, but to doubt myself, to see no future before me! And then, the sight of you, with your dear yellow curls and brown eyes, in the window opposite mine. How I followed you, at a distance, through the Luxembourg Gardens, admiring your grace, your movements! Ah, my dear little Lucile, you often made me forget my misery, and sometimes made it seem heavier. You were so far from me! How could I hope that some day—? But that some day is here—now! It can't escape me! I have you. I kiss your hands! For they have brought me all the

happiness in the world! The world that is freed through me! How happy I am! [*They kiss, and for a moment say nothing.*]

CAMILLE. You're crying?

LUCILE [*smiling*]. So are you. [*The lights in the windows are extinguished.*] The lights are out; see the dawn! [*The Crowd is heard outside.*]

CAMILLE [*after a moment's pause*]. Do you remember that old English story we read together? About the two children in Verona who were in love in that town?

LUCILE [*nodding*]. Why do you ask?

CAMILLE. I don't know. Who knows what the future holds in store for us?

LUCILE [*putting her hand over his mouth*]. Camille!

CAMILLE. Poor Lucile, do you think you would be strong enough, if ill-fortune—?

LUCILE. Who knows? I might if it were necessary. But I'm afraid for you; you will suffer terribly.

CAMILLE [*nervously*]. You say that as if you really thought it might happen?

LUCILE [*smiling*]. You are weaker than I, my hero.

CAMILLE [*smiling*]. Perhaps. I need love. I can't live alone.

LUCILE. I'll never leave you.

CAMILLE. Never! No matter what happens, let us have everything in common, and let nothing separate us, nothing keep us— [*A moment of silence. LUCILE is motionless, her head resting on his shoulder.*] Are you asleep?

LUCILE [*raising her head*]. No. [*With a sigh.*] God spare us those trials!

CAMILLE [*with a skeptical smile*]. God?

LUCILE [*her cheek against the window, and one arm about CAMILLE's neck*]. Don't you believe in God?

CAMILLE. Not yet.

LUCILE. What do you mean?

CAMILLE. We are creating Him now. Tomorrow, if I can believe in what my heart tells me, there will be a God: Man. [LUCILE *closes her eyes and sleeps*. CAMILLE *says quietly*.] Lucile!—She's asleep.

ROBESPIERRE [*coming across the street and catching sight of CAMILLE*]. You're still here?

CAMILLE. Sh!

ROBESPIERRE. You forget your duty. [CAMILLE *points to LUCILE*.—ROBESPIERRE *lowers his voice and looks at LUCILE*.] Poor child! [*He stands still a moment, looking at the pair. The sound of nearby drums awakens LUCILE. She catches sight of ROBESPIERRE and quickly jumps up.*]

LUCILE. Oh!

CAMILLE. What's the matter, Lucile? He is our friend Maximilien.

ROBESPIERRE [*bows to LUCILE*]. Didn't you recognize me?

LUCILE [*still trembling*]. You frightened me!

ROBESPIERRE. I beg your pardon.

CAMILLE. You're trembling.

LUCILE. I'm cold. Good-by, Camille. I'm so tired. I must go to sleep. [CAMILLE *smiles at her and blows a kiss*. ROBESPIERRE *bows*. She disappears,

after bowing to the men. The dawn has come, and the sky behind the Bastille is richly colored. In the midst of the far-off shouting are heard the first stray fusillades.]

ROBESPIERRE [turning toward the noise]. Come, now. No more love today. [*He goes out.*]

CAMILLE [*descending from the barricade*]. No more love? What then? Is it not love that now arouses this city, swelling every breast, and sacrificing the vast harvest of humanity? Oh, my love, you are not narrow and selfish, you bind me to these men with stronger bonds. You are everything, you embrace the whole world. It is not Lucile alone I love, but the universe. Through your dear eyes, I love all who love, who suffer, who are happy, who live, and who die. I love! I feel the sacred flame within me! It colors the eastern sky above the Bastille. The last shadows are gone, and this will go, too, this nightmare-shadow! [*The Bastille, monstrous and black, stands forth against the bright red sky. The voice of the cannon suddenly rends the silence, and reverberates above the confusion of the people in the distance, the fusillade, the bells, and the roll of the drums. CAMILLE smiles, and faces the Bastille, putting his finger to his nose.*] The wolf howls, ha! Growl, show your teeth! You are doomed! Since the King likes hunting, let us hunt the King!

ACT III

[*Tuesday, July 14th. The Interior Court of the Bastille. To the left are seen the bases of two enormous towers the tops of which are invisible. Between them are thick masses of wall, rising up like mountains of stone. Opposite is the gate and the draw-bridge leading to the Government Court. To the right, a one-story structure standing against the walls of the other towers. As the curtain rises, the Pensioner BÉQUART and his companions are stationed in the Court, with three cannon. VINTIMILLE, commander of the Pensioners, is seated, bored and indifferent. Swiss Guards enter now and then from the draw-bridge with news of the revolt, which is now heard outside the other gate leading to the Government Court. The rattle of muskets, cries, and the beating of drums are heard without. Occasional smoke clouds rise above the walls.*]

DE LAUNEY [*Governor of the Bastille, enters from the other court, nervous and agitated*]. Well, Monsieur de Vintimille, you see? They are attacking!

VINTIMILLE [*with a touch of irony and weariness*]. Well, Monsieur de Launey, let them attack. What is it to us? Unless they have wings, like the Messieurs Montgolfier, I defy them to make their way in.

THE PENSIONERS [*among themselves*]. Good God!

BÉQUART. Poor devils, they'll be ground to bits! Not one will be left living. Those damned Swiss keep firing on them. It's wrong to shoot down defenseless people like that! Especially when you are in a fort behind good solid walls.

A PENSIONER. Tell me, why are they attacking us?

BÉQUART. Can't tell what's come over them at all. Not like it used to be. Don't understand. They're all mad, this last month especially. Well, anyway, it's too bad to treat them like that. They're not bad. They're people like us.

PENSIONER. Well, it's the order. So much the worse. They had no business doing it.

BÉQUART. Of course. And it's fine to hear that music! I never thought I'd live to see another battle.

DE FLUE [*Commander of the Swiss Guards, entering from the other court*]. Monsieur le Gouverneur, will you please burn the houses in the neighborhood? They can shoot into the court from the roofs.

DE LAUNEY. No, I can't burn private property. I have no right.

DE FLUE. War without incendiarism is like eel without mustard. Very good of you to have these scruples! But when you make war, you must stop at nothing, or else never begin.

DE LAUNEY. What do you think, Monsieur de Vintimille?

VINTIMILLE [*with a shrug*]. It makes no difference to me. Do as you like. They'll never come in here. But if you care to profit by the occasion to clean out

the quarter, together with those idiots who meet there, don't hesitate. Do as you like; it's a matter of no importance.

DE LAUNEX. Let us wait; there is no immediate hurry. We have plenty of men and ammunition; we are not yet reduced to extremes. Are we, old Béquart?

BÉQUART. We're safe till the Last Judgment, Monsieur le Gouverneur. I served under Monsieur de Chevert at Prague forty-seven years ago. The Marshal de Belle-Isle stationed us there. We were a handful in the enemy's country; we were short of everything, and even the city was against us. They could never have dislodged us. And here we have only a rabble of women and shopkeepers, with solid walls between us, and the troops of the Champ de Mars and Sèvres only a step away. We can smoke our pipes and sit with crossed legs.

DE FLUE. The moment you think you're quiet, these frogs of Parisians fly at your throat. Throw a few stones at them and you'll see them jump back in their pond soon enough.

DE LAUNEX. Don't anger them too much.

DE FLUE. Give the rascals an inch and they'll take a mile. Hang the vagabond, or he will hang you.

BÉQUART. They're only poor devils, Monsieur de Flue. You mustn't be too hard on them. They really don't realize what they are doing.

DE FLUE. God, if they don't, I do! And that's enough.

DE LAUNEX. You are thinking only of the success of your battle, Monsieur de Flue. It's another matter

for me: I must think of the consequences. The responsibility is on my shoulders. How do I know what will please or displease the Court. How do I know what it wishes me to do?

DE FLUE. Do you not know an enemy of the King when you see him? Are we not here by order of His Majesty? If we are attacked, is it not His Majesty who is attacked?

DE LAUNEY. No one can be quite sure; His Majesty is never quite sure himself. His enemies one day are his friends the next. I have either no orders at all, or else they are contradictory. Some tell me to resist to the end; others tell me not to fire. Provost Flesselles confided to me that he is with me and that he is deceiving the people. He tells the people he is with them and is betraying me. Whom is he betraying? How can I be assured I am not displeasing the Court while I serve it, and know that it is not laying the blame on me? If it wishes to do something, has it not a thousand ways of doing so? Why does not Monsieur de Breteuil, with his Champ de Mars troops, attack these insurrectionists from the rear?

DE FLUE. Wonderful! What a time they would have!

VINTIMILLE [*to DE LAUNEY*]. My dear fellow, yours be the victory! You are always right. [*He goes to a corner and sits in the shadow.*]

BÉQUART [*who brings him a chair*]. Monseigneur, you are never quite your old sprightly self on days of battle.

VINTIMILLE. They weary me with their continual

discussions. [*Pointing to DE LAUNEX.*] He never knows what he wants; he must always consult every one, and get every one into embarrassing predicaments. What am I doing with such a vacillating person? They've given me a nasty task. There's no honor or pleasure to be derived from these squabbles. It's the business of the police to put down the people!

BÉQUART. It's not very pleasant to have to fire on the poor devils.

VINTIMILLE. You're becoming sentimental! Well, it's the fashion of the day, I suppose. Listen to the skunks out there! Disgusting. What do they want?

BÉQUART. Bread.

VINTIMILLE. Do they imagine the Bastille is a bakery? There they go again! They *are* in earnest. They seem most anxious to live. I wonder what interest they have in life? Their only pleasures are sour wine and unwashed women!

BÉQUART. You know, Monseigneur, that no matter how little one has to live for, one always clings to life.

VINTIMILLE. Oh, really? Speak for yourself!

BÉQUART. Oh, but you have everything to be desired.

VINTIMILLE. Do you envy me? Nothing in it, my boy.

BÉQUART. Nothing in it?

VINTIMILLE. Does that surprise you? You couldn't understand. Nothing! It is just the July sun—it makes me pessimistic.

A SWISS GUARD [*entering from the other court—to DE LAUNEX*]. Monseigneur, they are firing from the

neighboring houses. Some of them are perched on the roofs.

DE FLUE. Well, knock them off. It's only child's play for marksmen like you. [*Outside, HOCHÉ is heard singing the refrain of the song sung in the Second Act*]:

"Oh, come, thou God of Liberty,
And fill our souls this day—"

SWISS GUARDS [*outside*]. Forward! To the Governor!

DE FLUE. What's the trouble?

SWISS GUARDS [*entering from the exterior court, driving in HOCHÉ, with JULIE on his shoulders*]. Commander, we caught this—just as he was jumping over the outer wall.

HOCHÉ [*setting JULIE on the ground*]. There you are! And here we are! I told you you would be the first to enter!

JULIE [*joining her hands ecstatically*]. The Bastille!

VINTIMILLE. I don't see the joke? [*They form a circle about the newcomers*].

HOCHÉ [*quietly*]. Commander, we are envoys. [*The Soldiers laugh*].

DE LAUNÉY. Strange envoys!

HOCHÉ. We have no choice. We've been signaling to you, but you refused to see us. We jumped over the wall; that was the only way to reach you.

JULIE [*going to the Swiss Guards*]. Here they are!

SWISS GUARDS. What do you want, little brat?

JULIE. Are you the prisoners?

SWISS GUARDS [*laughing*]. Prisoners? No, we guard the prisoners.

HOCHE. You are not so very much mistaken. They, too, are prisoners, and more to be pitied than the others. They have lost even the desire for liberty.

DE LAUNEY. Who is this child?

HOCHE. Our good genius. She begged me to take her with me. I carried her on my back.

VINTIMILLE. Are you out of your head to expose the child to such danger?

HOCHE. Why should she not share our risks? She is sure to die if we die. Don't pretend to pity her; your cannon have no such scruples.

VINTIMILLE [*with his accustomed coldness and irony*]. A soldier! A petty officer who has deserted! So this is the envoy they send us? Capital! Well, shoot him. That will end his mission.

DE LAUNEY. One moment. It might be well to find out what they want.

VINTIMILLE. They have nothing to ask for.

DE FLUE. You don't parley with insurrectionists.

DE LAUNEY. Well, let us see: it costs nothing.

VINTIMILLE. Ridiculous. If we allowed them to discuss matters we might seem to be accepting them as equals.

DE LAUNEY. What shameless aberration led you to accept this mission?

HOCHE. The idea of serving both my friends and you.

VINTIMILLE. Do you realize what you have done? Do you know what a traitor is?

HOCHE. Yes, Monseigneur. He who takes up arms against his people.

VINTIMILLE [*turns his back with a shrug*]. Fool!

HOCHE. I beg your pardon, I did not intend to insult you. On the contrary, I come as a friend. I was told I would be shot. Possibly I shall, but really I should be surprised. I have come to try to help you to arrange matters. But if I am shot, well, you know the proverb: "A fine death compensates for a whole life."

DE LAUNEY. What is your message?

HOCHE [*presenting a letter*]. From the Permanent Committee of the Hôtel de Ville. [DE LAUNEY takes the letter, stands to one side, with two officers, reading it. The Pensioners hold JULIE on their knees.]

BÉQUART. Why did you take it into your head to come, little one? Do you know some one here?

JULIE. I know a great many.

BÉQUART. Where?

JULIE. In the prison.

BÉQUART. You have nice acquaintances! Who? Relatives?

JULIE. No.

BÉQUART. What are their names?

JULIE. I don't know.

BÉQUART. You don't know? What do they look like?

JULIE. I couldn't say.

BÉQUART. Are you making fun of us?

JULIE. No, no, I know them very well: I've seen them. Only, I can't say—

BÉQUART. Tell us.

JULIE. Mamma lives in the Rue Saint-Antoine, near here. The carriages that go to the prison pass our house at night. I get up and see them—I see nearly all. But sometimes I miss them, and when I wake up, they've already passed.

BÉQUART. Why did you want to see them?

JULIE. Because they suffer.

BÉQUART. It's not very pleasant to see people who suffer. Why do you want to see them?

JULIE [*naïvely*]. Because it makes me sad.

A PENSIONER [*laughing*]. There's a reason for you!

BÉQUART. Shut up! You fool!

THE PENSIONER [*angry at first*]. Fool? [*He reflects a moment, scratching his head.*] True, though!

JULIE [*who sits down and plays with a cannon*]. You're not going to fire on us, are you? [*They do not answer.*] Tell me you won't. Please. I like you. You must like me.

BÉQUART [*kissing her*]. Good little thing!

DE LAUNEY [*shrugs his shoulders, after reading the letter*]. This is unheard-of! Messieurs, this strange message which has been delivered to me by some committee of tramps—this—this Permanent Committee, asks me to divide the guard of the Bastille between the rest of our own troops and the people! [*The Soldiers laugh, the officers rage.*]

VINTIMILLE. Charming proposal!

HOCHE [*to DE LAUNEY*]. Listen to me, Monseigneur. You can prevent the carnage. We hold nothing against you personally, but against this mass of stone, which has for centuries weighed heavy on the people of Paris. Blind power is no less shameful to those who impose it than for those against whom it is directed. It is disgusting to every one who reasons. You who are more intelligent than we, ought to feel that and suffer more than we. Help us, do not fight against us. Reason, for which we are fighting, is as much your own as ours. Give up this prison of your own accord; don't force us to capture it.

VINTIMILLE. There he is spouting about reason and conscience. These Rousseau monkeys. [*To DE FLUE.*] My compliments! You made us a pretty present!

DE FLUE. What present?

VINTIMILLE. Your Jean-Jacques. You might at least have kept him in Switzerland.

DE FLUE. We would have been glad to dispense with him ourselves.

DE LAUNEY [*to HOCHE*]. You are crazy. Did you ever hear of the stronger relinquishing their arms, from sheer good-heartedness, to the weaker?

HOCHE. You are not the stronger.

DE LAUNEY. Do you think these brave men, these twenty cannon, twenty chests of bullets, and thousands of rounds of ammunition, are nothing?

HOCHE. You may kill a few hundred men. But what will that avail you? They will return thousands strong.

DE LAUNEY. We shall be re-inforced.

HOCHE. You will not be re-inforced. You might have been, but you were not. A king cannot murder his people; it would be not only murder but suicide. I tell you, you will be overcome. You display your artillery; you are used to the old-fashioned warfare, but you do not know the way we fight. You do not know what a freed nation is. War is only a game for you, because your hearts are not in it. Since Malplaquet, no one has taken an interest in the *Patric*. You were friends of the enemy you fought, and were glad of the success of the King of Prussia. Victory is not a necessity for you. But we have no choice: we must conquer. [*To the Pensioners.*] Comrades, I know you well, and I respect you; you are fine old fellows. But when you fought, you were merely obeying orders; you do not know what it means to fight for yourself. [*To BÉQUART.*] You yourself, Father Béquart—we all love you and admire your bravery—when you were at Prague, shut up with the enemy, you only defended your skin. We are fighting for our souls, and the souls of our sons and all the rest who will come after us. Do you hear the crowd outside? They are only a small part of our forces. Millions, all mankind to come, fight in our ranks, and make up that formidable and invisible mass which wins battles.

DE FLUE. You make me tired. We'll sweep those invisible masses off the earth with a few cannon-shots.

HOCHE. Do not fire. If you do, you are lost. A people is not a regular army; you can't let it loose without dire consequences.

VINTIMILLE [*to himself, as he looks at HOCHÉ*].

Strange men! How came our France to breed such creatures? They are Germans. Germans? No. I have known Prussians more French than this one. Who has wrought this change?

HOCHE. Remember, there is still chance for coming to an understanding; in a short while, that chance will be lost. The moment you draw blood, it will be too late.

DE FLUE. You had better give this advice to your friends.

HOCHE [*with a shrug, to JULIE*]. Come, little pigeon, they refuse your olive branch. [*He takes JULIE on his shoulder.*]

DE LAUNEY [*to HOCHE*]. Nothing can conquer the Bastille. It may be surrendered, but never taken.

HOCHE. It will be surrendered.

DE LAUNEY. And who will surrender it?

HOCHE. Your evil conscience! [*HOCHE goes out with JULIE, amid a general silence. No one thinks of stopping him.*]

VINTIMILLE [*reflectively*]. Our evil conscience!

DE LAUNEY [*suddenly*]. Well! Why did we let him go?

DE FLUE. He is still in the court.

DE LAUNEY. Run after him and stop him!

BÉQUART. Monseigneur, it is impossible.

THE PENSIONERS [*grunting assent*]. He's an envoy.

DE LAUNEY. Impossible, you rascal! Envoy from whom?

BÉQUART [*gravely*]. The people.

DE FLUE [*to the Swiss Guards*]. Arrest him!

BÉQUART *and the PENSIONERS* [*to the Swiss Guards*].
No, comrades, not that! Don't arrest him!

A SWISS GUARD [*trying to pass*]. That was the command.

BÉQUART *and the PENSIONERS*. Don't you dare go, or you'll have us to deal with!

VINTIMILLE [*watching them, aside*]. Ah, ha! [*Aloud.*] Good! [*To DE LAUNEY.*] Don't insist.

A SWISS GUARD [*entering from the exterior court, to DE LAUNÉY*]. Monseigneur, there is an immense crowd coming out of the Rue Saint-Antoine. They have taken the Invalides, and are dragging along twenty cannon.

DE FLUE. The devil! But we must decide now, or everything will be spoiled. Let us rout the band, or they will defeat us. [*Great clouds of smoke roll up above the outer walls.*]

DE LAUNEY. What is that smoke?

A SWISS GUARD. They've fired the outlying buildings.

DE LAUNEY. Scoundrels! So they want a pitiless warfare? They shall have it.

DE FLUE. Shall we fire?

DE LAUNEY. Wait—

DE FLUE. For what, in the name of God?

DE LAUNEY [*with a questioning look at VINTIMILLE*].
Monsieur de Vintimille.

VINTIMILLE [*rather scornfully*]. I told you what I thought. Do as you like. One word of advice: whatever you decide on, don't change it.

DE LAUNEY. You have a free hand, Monsieur de Flue. Give it to them! [DE LAUNEY, DE FLUE, and the Swiss Guards go out into the other court.]

VINTIMILLE [*meditates with an ironical smile. A few steps from him, the Pensioners are guarding the cannon.*] Our evil conscience! The corporal thinks he has a right to a conscience! He's richer than I. Conscience! It is neither good nor bad. It simply does not exist. Honor, yes. Honor? Under the late King, honor consisted in scheming for him to take one's wife or sister—provided they were presentable—for a mistress, or else in marrying the titled courtesan—honor! And now to have it barked at by this brothel-whelp. Let us not trouble honor. Really, I don't know why I am fighting here. Loyalty? Fidelity to the King? We are too used to clear thinking to be deceived by empty phrases. I have not believed in the King for many a long year. Well, then? [*He shrugs his shoulders.*] Habit, manners, fashion? We know we are wrong, we do not believe in what we are doing, and yet we must go through it to the end and behave correctly, elegantly, in order to conceal the utter uselessness of our existence. [*Great confusion outside. The Swiss Guards suddenly rush back with DE FLUE and DE LAUNEY from the exterior court.*]

THE SWISS GUARDS. They are coming!

VINTIMILLE. What! Who are coming? The people? Impossible!

DE FLUE [*without troubling to answer*]. Quick! Up with the draw-bridge! God Almighty!

DE LAUNEY. To the cannon! [*The Swiss Guards*

quickly raise the draw-bridge. The Pensioners roll the cannon into place opposite the gate. Immediately after, the Crowd is heard shouting and muttering like an angry sea, just outside.

VINTIMILLE [*stupefied*]. Are they in! Really?

DE FLUE [*puffing*]. Just in time! The damned rascals! [*To VINTIMILLE.*] Would you believe they could have torn down the outer draw-bridge? You know the perfumer's house next to the outer gate? I told you, we ought to have burned all those houses! There were three or four of them on the roof—carpenters, masons—well, they scaled that wall like monkeys and got to the roof of the guard-house. No one was watching the place. They got to the gate, broke the chains, and the bridge fell right into the midst of the crowd, knocking a dozen of them flat. You should have seen them scramble and shout! The nasty scoundrels! [*The confusion among soldiers and officers has up to the present concealed a group of Swiss Guards some distance away, who bring in a woman prisoner.*]

SWISS GUARDS [*with LA CONTAT in their midst.*] We've made a good capture.

VINTIMILLE [*bowing*]. Why, it's you, Contat? You come to the rendezvous, I see! A silver helmet over your blonde hair, musket in hand; why, you look like the goddess of Liberty herself. So you were curious to come and see for yourself? You will be safe here, and may look around without danger. [*He extends his hand to her, but she hesitates to take it.*] You won't shake hands? We were good friends not very long ago. Are we not still? [*She decides to*

shake hands.] Well, what's the matter? You look at me with those great eyes of yours, and you don't say a word? Are you afraid?

LA CONTAT. I—I beg your pardon. I hardly know where I am, and I am not sure whether to consider you as a friend or an enemy.

VINTIMILLE. An enemy? But why? Really, were you fighting us?

LA CONTAT. You know, it's not in my character to be a spectator; I must always play important parts. [*She shows her musket, which a Pensioner takes from her at a sign from VINTIMILLE.*]

VINTIMILLE. You were tired of playing comedy, and you decided to turn to drama. But do you realize, my dear, that your little escapade has put you in danger of spending a few months in Fort-l'Evêque?

LA CONTAT. I risked far more than that.

VINTIMILLE. But you were not in earnest, Contat? You one of these brawlers? [*He scrutinizes her from head to foot.*] No rouge, no beauty-spots. Your hands black—face streaming with perspiration—your hair wet, sticking to your cheeks. You're breathing hard. Muddy to the knees! Covered with filth and powder! What's happened to you? Why, I know you well, and I am sure you never liked that filthy rabble any more than I.

LA CONTAT. No, I didn't.

VINTIMILLE. A love-affair, then? Is he in that crowd?

LA CONTAT. I thought it was that at first. But there is something else.

VINTIMILLE. What?

LA CONTAT. I do not know. I couldn't tell you exactly why I am fighting: but I felt it not long ago. I was ready to cut your throat.

VINTIMILLE [*laughing*]. You always liked to exaggerate.

LA CONTAT. I am not joking now.

VINTIMILLE. But, Contat, you are a woman of sense; you don't do things without a reason?

LA CONTAT. I have a reason, but I can't explain it now. A few moments ago it was so powerful, so clear to me. The feelings of those people thrill me, like the roll of thunder. Now that I am separated from them, I don't know, I don't know what—

VINTIMILLE. You were mad. Confess it.

LA CONTAT. No, no: I am sure they are right.

VINTIMILLE. Right to rebel against the King, kill people, and die for a nothing?

LA CONTAT. They are not dying for nothing.

VINTIMILLE. No, of course not: for Monsieur d'Orléans' écus!

LA CONTAT. My dear, you're the same as ever: you always minimize one's motives.

VINTIMILLE. Money is not a small motive to vagabonds who have none. Can you give me a better motive?

LA CONTAT. Liberty.

VINTIMILLE. What is that?

LA CONTAT. I don't like your ironical smile. When you look at me that way, I don't know what to say. Even if I did, I shouldn't say it. It would be useless:

you could never understand. You may at least listen, and watch.

THE PEOPLE [*outside*]. We want the Bastille!

VINTIMILLE [*coldly*]. Yes, it's curious, very curious.

DE LAUNEY [*in consternation*]. What the devil is urging those idiots on?

THE PENSIONERS [*looking with mingled interest and sympathy through the loop-holes in the gate*]. Women!—Priests!—Bourgeois!—Soldiers!—There, there's that little girl on Hulin's shoulders.—She's kicking her feet like a little devil!

DE FLUE [*talking to the Swiss Guards*]. Good. They're caught in a trap now, between the walls. We can get at them from the towers.

DE LAUNEY. Clear the court! Smash them! [DE FLUE and the Guards run into the Bastille through the gate leading to the towers.]

BÉQUART and the PENSIONERS [*murmuring*]. It's going to be a butchery!—They're hardly armed. And those children—!

THE PEOPLE. We want the Bastille! [LA CONTAT and VINTIMILLÉ have not followed DE FLUE's and DE LAUNEY's conversation. LA CONTAT's attention is wholly occupied with the People, as she listens to their shouting.]

LA CONTAT [*shouting to the people outside*]. Courage! I am the first to take it! [The beat of drums is now heard.]

BÉQUART and the PENSIONERS [*looking out*]. They want to parley again: they're waving handkerchiefs, signaling to us.

VINTIMILLE [*also looking out*]. The Attorney is leading them.

DE LAUNEY. Let's see what they want.

VINTIMILLE. Cease firing! [*The Pensioners throw down their muskets. The drums are heard beating near the moat. VINTIMILLE and some of the Pensioners go up to the right of the gate toward an opening in the wall from which they can overlook the assailants. VINTIMILLE addresses the people.*] What do you want? [*At the same moment a volley is fired from the upper part of the towers. VINTIMILLE turns.*] What the devil are they doing?

THE PENSIONERS and DE LAUNEY [*astonished*]. The Swiss Guards are firing!—Stop them! Stop them! [*Some run to the tower gate and disappear.*]

VINTIMILLE [*having descended again into the court*]. Too late! Pretty piece of work they've done! Listen to those cries! They aimed well. They think we fired from a secret hiding-place. [*The People howl with rage. VINTIMILLE turns and sees LA CONTAT, who has come up behind him and looks at him with hatred in her eyes.*] What's the trouble, Contat? [*She does not answer, but suddenly seizes VINTIMILLE's sword, snatches it from the scabbard, and attempts to stab him. The Pensioners seize her hands and hold her in spite of her heroic struggle to free herself.*] So you wanted to kill me! [*LA CONTAT nods. She keeps her eyes fixed on him, and to the end of scene cannot utter a word, but trembles convulsively, panting like a beast.*] You aren't sane. What's happened? I have done nothing to you. You know they acted contrary to orders.

You yourself saw— Don't you recognize me, Contat? [*She nods.*] Do you really hate me? [*She nods as before.*] Speak to me? Won't you say a word? [*He attempts to touch her, but she pulls back, and struggles again with the soldiers, who hold her hands. She then falls back in a sort of epileptic fit, screaming and moaning. They carry her off. Her cries are still heard. Outside, the People are screaming.*]

DE LAUNEY [*in consternation*]. She's like a wild animal. You would not recognize her.

VINTIMILLE. She is not herself. Something strange and new is in her: the poison of that mob. It's too disgusting. I can't understand it. It's like a wind of bestiality blown from the monstrous part of humanity. [*The Swiss Guards descend from the towers with DE FLUE.*]

DE LAUNEY [*very much excited, goes to meet DE FLUE*]. What have you done? What have you done?

DE FLUE [*fuming*]. By God, I did what you told me to do! You ordered me to smash them, and I have smashed them. It seems you've changed your mind, and you want peace. What the devil do you want me to do?

DE LAUNEY. We're lost now.

DE FLUE. Lost? [*He shrugs his shoulders, and motions to his Guards to roll the cannon into position.*]

BÉQUART and the PENSIONERS. What are you doing?

THE SWISS GUARDS. Three volleys and the court will be empty.

BÉQUART *and the PENSIONERS.* You're not going to fire?

THE SWISS GUARDS. Why not?

BÉQUART. Into the mob? It would be nothing but massacre!

THE SWISS GUARDS. What's that to us?

BÉQUART. They are our relatives, Frenchmen like the rest of us. Put that cannon back, and don't dare fire.

THE SWISS GUARDS. Get out of our way. Let us pass! [*They knock BÉQUART out of the way.*]

THE PENSIONERS. Damned Germans! [*They cross bayonets.*]

THE SWISS GUARDS. Knock them down! These battered scarecrows! They can't frighten us!

BÉQUART. If you advance, I'll fire. [*He takes aim. VINTIMILLE and DE FLUE stand between them.*]

DE FLUE! Down with your weapons! Down, by God! [*He beats them with his cane.*]

VINTIMILLE. Snarling dogs!

DE LAUNEY [*at his wits' end*]. They too are in revolt! They won't fight now! All is lost! [*He rushes toward the citadel and tries to enter.*]

VINTIMILLE [*stopping him*]. Where are you going?

DE LAUNEY [*in desperation*]. To die! But they will die with us!

VINTIMILLE. What are you going to do?

DE LAUNEY. To the basements! Tons of powder! Set it off!

THE PENSIONERS. Don't do that!

DE LAUNEY. I will!

VINTIMILLE. And blow up a large part of Paris? What heroism! It's too ridiculous. You really couldn't do that unless you believed in something! Ridiculous to do it for no reason at all. You mustn't upset the table just because you lose.

DE LAUNEY. But what can I do?

THE PENSIONERS. Surrender.

DE LAUNEY. Never! The King confided the Bastille to me. I shall never surrender! [*He again tries to go, but the Pensioners seize him.*]

THE PENSIONERS [*to VINTIMILLE*]. Monseigneur, you command us!

VINTIMILLE [*coldly*]. Monsieur le Gouverneur is not well. Conduct him to his apartments, and take care of him.

DE LAUNEY [*struggling*]. Traitors! Cowards! [*They carry him off.*]

VINTIMILLE [*aside*]. I was an idiot to get dragged into this! Nothing to do now. I must draw my next card with equanimity. [*Aloud.*] Monsieur de Flue?

DE FLUE. What is it?

VINTIMILLE. Let us draw up our capitulation papers.

DE FLUE. Papers? No, thanks, I'll have nothing to do with them. [*He turns his back. VINTIMILLE writes, leaning against a cannon.*]

A SWISS GUARD [*to DE FLUE*]. They will massacre us.

DE FLUE [*phlegmatically*]. Possibly. [*He sits down on a drum and lights his pipe.*]

THE SWISS GUARDS [*wiping their faces*]. Damned

heat! Can't we have something to drink? [*A Guard gets a pitcher of water, which is passed around. The Guards are together at the left, with their officer; they are indifferent and bored. The Pensioners, opposite, stand about the cannon where VINTIMILLE is writing. They watch with respect every movement he makes. BÉQUART holds the inkstand for him. VINTIMILLE reads in a low voice to BÉQUART what he has written, BÉQUART nodding approval. His comrades repeat the words among themselves, likewise nodding.*]

THE PENSIONERS [*with mingled irony and approval*]. The lamb has captured the wolf.

VINTIMILLE. I demand their promise that no one shall be harmed.

BÉQUART. It costs us nothing to ask.

VINTIMILLE [*smiling*]. It costs nothing to promise. [*He goes to DE FLUE.*] Will you sign?

DE FLUE [*as he signs*]. Fine way to fight!—Well, it's not my affair.

VINTIMILLE. The difficulty is not in writing, but in making them read what we write. [*The Pensioners, approaching the gate, are greeted by musket-shots.*]

THE PENSIONERS. They're desperate. They won't let any one come near.

BÉQUART. Give me the love-missive.

THE PENSIONERS. You'll get killed, Béquart.

BÉQUART. What do I care? I'm not capitulating in order to save myself.

THE SWISS GUARDS. Why, then?

THE PENSIONERS [*pointing to the People*]. To save them! [*Among themselves, scornfully.*] They don't

understand a thing! [BÉQUART *advances to the gate. —The Pensioners shout to him.*] How will you give it to them?

BÉQUART [*pointing to his pike*]. On the end of this spit.

VINTIMILLE [*turning toward the towers*]. Hoist the white flag!

THE PENSIONERS [*shouting*]. Up there, hey! The flag! [*The gate opens. BÉQUART goes up toward the opening in the wall, right of the draw-bridge.*]

BÉQUART [*waving his arms and crying*]. Capitulation! [*He is received by a veritable tempest of shouts and musket-shots. He totters, and shouts out in fury as he shakes his fist at the crowd.*] Pigs! It's for your sake! For you!

THE PENSIONERS [*crowding about the draw-bridge, and shouting outside*]. Don't fire! Don't fire! [*Outside the people are heard shouting, "Don't fire!" then, "Surrender!" This cry increases, and finally voices are heard in heated discussion. After a moment, there is silence.*] Hoche and Hulin are making them put down their muskets. They understand. They are stopping. They are coming up to the moat.

BÉQUART, [*leaning out far over the wall, with the letter at the end of his pike*]. Hurry! I haven't time to wait.

THE PENSIONERS [*still looking outside*]. Hulin's bringing a plank. He's throwing it across the moat. Some one's crossing—he's lost his balance! He's falling! No, he's safe now.

BÉQUART [*panting for breath*]. Hurry up! Hurry!

THE PENSIONERS. He's touching the pike. He has the paper.

BÉQUART [*standing upright*]. There! [*Looking at the People.*] Pigs! [*He raises his arms and shouts.*] Long live the Nation! [*He falls back, struck by a bullet.*]

THE PENSIONERS. Pigs! They've killed him! [*Two of them go to BÉQUART's body, and bring it down to the center of the stage, laying it at VINTIMILLE's feet.*]

VINTIMILLE [*looking at the body with a mixture of irony and sympathy*]. Honor? To what end?

THE PENSIONERS. Listen! [*Outside is heard the shout of the People accepting the conditions, and the Pensioners repeat:*] Accepted!

VINTIMILLE [*with indifference*]. Inform Monsieur le Gouverneur.

THE PENSIONERS. Monseigneur, he's gone crazy: he's broken all the furniture in his room. He cries like a baby.

VINTIMILLE [*with a shrug*]. Well, I shall take his place to the end. [*To himself, with a touch of ironic bitterness.*] I never thought I should one day have the honor of giving up the royalty of France with these four-century-old walls into the hands of the lawyers. A beautiful duty! To think I should come to this! Well, nothing matters; everything passes, and everything ends. Death settles all accounts. Now we'll give them a little comedy—with the grand manner at the last. [*Aloud.*] Fall in! Form in line! [*The garrison falls into rank; the Pensioners on the right,*

the Swiss Guards, left. DE FLUE is standing, while VINTIMILLE rises, using his cane to support himself.] Butt-ends of your muskets in the air! Messieurs, I think I ought to inform you that in spite of the precautions I have taken, there will be some surprises when the enemy makes its entrance. You know they are not a disciplined army. But if they show any lack of military manners, that is no excuse for our behaving likewise. And you, Swiss Guards, in the name of the King, I thank you for your obedience. You deserve more credit than the others. [*He turns his back on the Pensioners and smiles a little.*] As to you, we understand each other. [*The Pensioners murmur approval.*]

DÉ FLUE [*phlegmatically*]. War is war! [*A Pensioner whistles: "Ou peut-on être mieux qu'au sein de sa famille?"*]

VINTIMILLE [*turning toward him, and, with a disdainful gesture*]. You need not trouble to show your glee! It's indecent, my friend.

THE PENSIONER. Monseigneur, I couldn't help it.

VINTIMILLE. Why, you are positively proud to be beaten!

THE PENSIONER [*warmly*]. We are not beaten! They would never have taken the Bastille unless we had wished them to. [*His comrades murmur approval.*]

VINTIMILLE. Do you mean to say that it is we who have taken the Bastille?

PENSIONER. There is some truth in it.

VINTIMILLE. Well—! To your post! [*After a*

pause.] Open the gate. Lower the draw-bridge. [*Some of the men open the gate and slowly lower the draw-bridge. The People outside continue their shouting.*] Here, then, comes the new King, ha! [*The draw-bridge is now down. A formidable clamor arises, as the human flood pours in through the opened gate. Men and women, armed with pikes, hatchets, and muskets, surge through. At their head is GONCHON, who is pushed forward, flourishing his saber in the air. HOCHÉ and HULIN make vain efforts to silence the mob. There are cries of death and victory. VINTIMILLE takes off his hat.*] Messieurs, the rabble!

PENSIONERS [*suddenly swept away by their enthusiasm, wave their hats*]. Long live Liberty!

VINTIMILLE. Messieurs, messieurs, have you no sense of shame?

PENSIONERS [*with waxing enthusiasm*]. Long live Liberty! [*They throw away their muskets and rush into the arms of the People.*]

VINTIMILLE [*with a shrug*]. Ah, human reason, how frail thou art! Farewell, Monsieur de Vintimille. [*He breaks his sword. GONCHON, at his wits' end, pushed forward by the howling mob—among whom is distinguished the OLD FRUIT-SELLER—fall upon VINTIMILLE, DE FLUE, and their soldiers, dragging them off the stage with shouts and curses.*]

GONCHON. Rip them open!

THE OLD WOMAN. Dogs of aristocrats!

THE PEOPLE. Swiss pigs!—I know these fellows!—The old lame ones!—The enemy! Kill them! They fired on us! [*HOCHÉ and HULIN, who try to stop the*

People, are brushed aside by them and thrown against a wall. In the midst of the hubbub, MARAT is seen.]

Long live Marat!

MARAT. My children, what are you doing?

THE WOMEN. Kill! Kill!

MARAT. Kill them? What do you want? Would you eat them? [*Some of the crowd laugh.*]

HULIN. He knows how to handle them: amuse them!

HOCHE. Where is the little girl?

HULIN. The little girl? [*HOCHE runs out to look for JULIE.*]

DESMOULINS [*jumping into their midst*]. Stop, comrades, you're killing prisoners!

THE PEOPLE [*stopping*]. The prisoners?

DESMOULINS. The prisoners of the Bastille. Look at their clothes. We have come to free them!

THE PEOPLE [*doubtfully*]. They're enemies!

HULIN. There are no more enemies.

JULIE [*on HOCHE's shoulders, carrying a branch, extends her arms to the People, and shouts*]. Be merciful to our friends, our friends the enemy.

THE PEOPLE [*laughing*]. Hear the little one!

HOCHE [*putting her down on a cannon, whence she dominates the crowd*]. Shout, child: "All brothers, all friends."

JULIE. Brothers! Brothers!

THE PEOPLE. We are all brothers! She's right!

THE PENSIONERS. Long live the People!

THE PEOPLE. Long live the ancient glory!

THE PENSIONERS [*to JULIE*]. You've saved us, little one!

THE PEOPLE. She conquered you, too, comrades. The little mite took the Bastille.

MARAT. You are our good conscience!

THE PEOPLE. You are our little Liberty! [*They stretch out their arms. The women blow kisses to her.*]

HOCHE [*clapping HULIN on the shoulder*]. Well, Hulin? You everlasting doubter, are you at last convinced?

HULIN [*wiping his eyes, but still a little obstinate*]. Yes, although— [*Laughter from HOCHE and the People drown out the rest. He stops and laughs louder than the others. He looks about him, and catching sight of a statue of the King in a niche by the entrance to the court, he picks it up.*] Down with you! Make way for Liberty! [*He throws the statue down, then runs to JULIE, picks her up and puts her in the niche.*] The Bastille fallen at last! I did it! We did it! We'll do a lot more, too! Let's clean the stables of Augias, rid the earth of its monsters, and strangle the lion of royalty. Our fists will lay low all despotism! Comrades, we shall forge the Republic! We've been held down too long, and now we're bursting our bonds! Roll on, oh, torrent of the Revolution!

THE OLD FRUIT-SELLER [*astride a cannon, with a red kerchief about her head*]. To the King! Here's my horse. I took him. I'll hitch him to my little cart and we'll go to Versailles to make a visit to big Louis! I've got a lot to say to him. Lord, for centuries I've lived in misery, I've been so patient! I'm choking; I must get rid of the feeling. I was a good old

animal! I thought I had to suffer, in order to enjoy riches. Now at last I understand. I want to live, I want to live! I'm sorry I'm so old. God Almighty, I want to make up for lost time! Get up, old fellow, to the Court! [*The gun-carriage is pushed forward by the People, and the old woman, in her helmet and trappings, rides past in triumph.*]

THE PEOPLE. On to the Court! On to Versailles! We've suffered too long! We want to be happy! We'll be happy!

DESMOULINS [*carrying a green branch*]. The forest of Liberty has sprung up from the stones. Green leaves wave in the wind. The old heart of Paris will flower once again. Spring has come!

THE PEOPLE [*bursting with joy and pride, all wave branches, and decorate themselves with green cockades, green ribbons, etc.*]. Free! The Heavens are free! [*The sunset filters in through the draw-bridge opening, and bathes in purple the inner court of the Bastille and the People with their waving branches.*]

HOCHE. Sun, you may sleep now, for we have not wasted our day.

LA CONTAT. Its dying rays paint the castle windows, the branches, the heads and little Liberty, a glowing red.

HULIN. Heaven announces the war.

MARAT. Unlike Him who entered seventeen hundred years ago in the midst of branches, this little child has not come to bring us peace.

DESMOULINS. There is blood on our hands.

ROBESPIERRE [*with suppressed fanaticism*]. It is our own!

THE PEOPLE [*excited*]. It's mine!—It's mine!—We offer it to you, Liberty!

DESMOULINS. To the devil with our lives! Great happiness must be bought.

HOCHE. And we are ready to pay.

ROBESPIERRE [*as before*]. We will pay.

THE PEOPLE [*enthusiastically*]. We will pay! [*The People dance and sing about the little figure of Liberty. Music.*]

LA CONTAT. What joy to be one of you! To love and to suffer with you! Give me your hands! Let us dance, and all be brothers! Sing, for this is your festival, Oh, people of Paris!

MARAT. My dear people, you have suffered so long, you have struggled so long in silence. So many centuries had to elapse before this hour of joy! Liberty is yours. Guard well your conquest.

DESMOULINS [*to the People*]. And now, finish what you have begun. This Bastille has fallen, but there are others. On to the fight! We must fight against the enemies of truth! Against darkness! Mind will dominate brute force. The past is dead! Death itself is dead!

HULIN [*to JULIE*]. Our Liberty, our light, our love! How small you are now! And how frail! Will you have the strength to resist the tempests that lie ahead? Grow, grow, little plant, straight up, and vigorous, and give happiness to the world with your fragrance of the fields!

HOCHE [*saber in hand, climbs to an eminence at the foot of the niche where Liberty stands*]. Be reassured, Liberty, you are safe with us. We hold you fast. Woe be unto him who molests you! You belong to us, and we belong to you. These spoils, these trophies, are yours. [*The women strew Liberty with flowers. The men then lower their pikes, banners, branches, and trophies in her presence.*] But all this is not yet enough: we will give you a deathless triumph. Daughter of the People of Paris, your eyes shall inspire every enslaved nation. We will carry across the universe the great banner of Equality. We will take your chariot into the midst of battles, with the aid of our sabers, our cannon, toward Love, toward the brotherhood of all mankind! Brothers, my brothers! We are all brothers! We are all free! Come, let us deliver the world! [*Swords, lances, branches, handkerchiefs, hats, and arms wave madly, amid the uproar of drums, trumpets, and shouting. The People dance about the figure of Liberty.*]

THE FOURTEENTH
OF JULY

A PLAY IN THREE ACTS

ROMAIN ROLLAND

THE FOURTEENTH OF JULY

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